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C. S. SONNINI.

Published August 3d 1799, by I. Stockdale, Piccadilly.

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C. Sonnini de Manoncourt
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TRAVELS

IN

UPPER AND LOWER EGYPT:

UNDERTAKEN BY ORDER OF

THE OLD GOVERNMENT OF FRANCE;

BY

C. S. SONNINI,

ENGINEER IN THE FRENCH NAVY, AND MEMBER OF SEVERAL SCIENTIFIC AND LITERARY SOCIETIES.

ILLUSTRATED WITH FORTY ENGRAVINGS;

CONSISTING OF

Portraits, Views, Plans, a Geographical Chart, Antiquities, Plants, Animals, &c.

Drawn on the Spot, under the Author's Inſpection.

.. .. Tolerantia rerum
Spernebat cunctas inſuperata minas.
Vertice nudato, ventos pluviaſque ferebam.
Non mihi ſolſtitium, non grave frigus erat.
.....
Quamvis exiguo poteram requieſcere ſomno,
Et quamvis modico membra fovere cibo.

CORN. GALLUS, *Epig.* I. *Senect. Deſcr.*

Tranſlated from the French,

BY HENRY HUNTER, D. D.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

London:

PRINTED FOR JOHN STOCKDALE, PICCADILLY.

1799.

T. Gillet, Printer, Salisbury Square.

MVSEVM
BRITAN
NICVM

TO

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE

WILLIAM PITT,

CHANCELLOR OF HIS MAJESTY's EXCHEQUER;

UNDER PROVIDENCE,

THE BULWARK BETWEEN FRENCH AMBITION

AND

THE LIBERTIES OF MANKIND,

THIS TRANSLATION

IS RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED,

BY

HIS OBEDIENT SERVANT,

HENRY HUNTER.

TRANSLATOR's PREFACE.

ONE of the firſt books of Hiſtory put into our hands, contains many curious and intereſting particulars reſpecting ancient Egypt. The recollection of theſe carries us with a warmer impulſe to contemplate the preſent ſtate of things in that country. The French nation, each individual an Alexander, aims at nothing leſs than the conqueſt of the globe. After having over-run a great part of Europe, they turned their eyes eaſtward to Aſia, and, without the *veni*, it was *vidi*, *vici*, and the iſlands of the Egean Sea furniſhed another *department* to the Republic. It was but a ſtep thence to Africa, to greet the Mameluc of Egypt with the fraternal embrace, and add *twenty more* to the departments of the Great Nation. The ambition of the *Kings* of France has more than once threatened the liberties of Europe; but the little finger of a modern *Citizen* of that country is thicker than the loins of kings. They muſt have *a city and a tower, whoſe top*

may

may reach unto heaven: France muſt be aggrandized, and Paris embelliſhed, at whatever rate.

The publication of M. Sonnini's Travels throws conſiderable light on Buonaparte's expedition. Louis XVI. employed the former of theſe gentlemen to travel through Egypt, merely in the view of phyſical and commercial arrangements; the Directory ſend thither the hero of Italy, with a vaſt army, to make a conqueſt of the country. How it has ſped the world by this time knows. Ceſar's laconic boaſt is now curtailed of it's third limb. The Republican General can go no farther than the *veni, vidi:* but the *vici* lies buried without the walls of Saint-Jean d'Acre. Our Author is a very good obſerver of what is, but he knows nothing of what will be: he is an excellent naturaliſt, but a moſt wretched prophet: he has miſtaken the fond dreams of a patriotic imagination for a revelation from heaven; *and like the baſeleſs fabric of a viſion leaves not a wreck behind.*

Both the writer and the warrior have conveyed a moſt uſeful leſſon to mankind: it is to regard with a jealous eye, a people, who, under

under every form of government, ſtill aim at domineering. Whether they go forth in travelling parties or in armed hoſts; whether they cultivate ſcience or till the ground; whether they plant the tree of liberty or unfurl the bloody flag, the Frenchman never loſes ſight of his motto, *Extollenda eſt Gallia*. He has got liberty and fraternity in his mouth, but mark, he has got a rod in his hand, and Flanders, Holland, Switzerland, a great part of Germany, and almoſt all Italy, have felt it to be a rod of iron.

Theſe Travels, and the political and commercial views which they unfold, are peculiarly intereſting to Great Britain at this criſis. I thought it a duty which I owed to *my* country to lay them before the Public without delay, and, to keep pace as much as poſſible with the general impatience to ſee the work in Engliſh, called in aſſiſtance toward forwarding the Tranſlation. I hold myſelf, however, reſponſible for the whole, flattering myſelf it will be found a fair and faithful tranſcript of the original.

H. H.

Hoxton,
9th Auguſt, 1799.

AUTHOR'S PREFACE.

A DAWN of hope appears that Egypt, now ſo vilely degraded, abandoned to plunderers and barbarians, may at length recover the luſtre which once diſtinguiſhed her among the nations of the globe. Transferred into the poſſeſſion of a people as renowned as that which was once the boaſt of antiquity, this celebrated country, which ages of unrelenting deſtruction have completely diſguiſed, will re-aſſume her departed glory. The men as well as the ſoil; the territory as well as it's inhabitants, are haſtening to wear a new aſpect; and the period is at hand when Egypt ſhall no longer be what ſhe lately was.

It could not, then, be unintereſting to exhibit a view of Egypt ſuch as the French ſhall have found it; to depict the manners of the different tribes who inhabited it, and among whom civilization is going to ſucceed to groſs and ferocious ignorance; to deſcribe the wreck of auguſt

auguſt monuments, ſcattered over a ſoil rendered proud by their boldneſs and their enormous maſſes; to delineate ſome traces of the rich attire which generous nature has inceſſantly diſplayed before the eyes of ungrateful men who never ceaſed, in their turn, to requite her kindneſs with outrage; in a word, to preſent a ſketch of this portion of Africa before it ſhall have changed it's appearance. This repreſentation will enable the reader to follow with avidity the progreſs of an unexpected regeneration, and the labours which our compatriots are gone to depoſit in the boſom of immortality.

But for theſe conſiderations, the work now ſubmitted to the public had probably never ſeen the light. The Author would have ſuffered the materials of it to ſleep in his portfolio; but he deemed himſelf under an obligation to render an account to his country of the knowledge which he had acquired, in the perſuaſion that, after having ſerved her with zeal, his duty was not completely diſcharged, till he had conſecrated to her, beſides, the reſult of an enterprize engaged in, ſolely with a view to make it ſubſervient to the public good.

The

The work has been moulded into the form of a relation, as beſt adapted to a book of travels. There is a pleaſure in laying hold of a traveller's hand, in making one in his parties, in partaking of his fatigues and dangers, as well as in enjoying with him the ſucceſs with which his reſearches are crowned. But this relation has not the dryneſs of a journal or of an itinerary. Obſervations, elucidations, general reflections, relieve it from ſuch a tireſome monotomy.

It was the Author's intention to have given a new map of Egypt, more accurate than any one hitherto exhibited; but he had not time ſufficient for executing his idea; he has therefore adopted D'Anville's chart, as the leaſt defective which he has had an opportunity of inſpecting, though aſſuredly it leaves ample room for improvement. Drawings exact, and taken on the ſpot, repreſent objects of various kinds, moſt of them not generally known; the ſingular figures diſcovered in the Temple of Iſis, at *Dendera*, will attract particular attention. The Author takes credit to himſelf for having followed the advice of a learned antiquarian, the Count de Caylus, who *exhorts thoſe who collect monuments of antiquity, to communicate them*

to

to the public, becauſe their collection, though it conſiſt but of few articles, may preſent ſingularities not to be found in the moſt extenſive cabinets. The collection of drawings for this work, contains, in fact, ſome very curious ſingularities. Finally, nothing has been neglected that could prevent theſe travels from ſinking too far below their ſubject, and the intereſt generally excited by new deſtinies of a country fruitful in wonders.

ERRATA.

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And for Plate 6, read Plate 7.
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TRAVELS
IN
UPPER AND LOWER EGYPT.

CHAP. I.

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IT is rather late to enter on a career which ought long ago to have been accompliſhed. It muſt appear very extraordinary to defer to the ſeventh year of the French Republic the publication of travels which terminated in the year 1780. No traveller ſurely ever advanced ſo ſlowly to meet the public eye. Others, on the contrary, almoſt to a man, diſcover an ardor of impatience, on their return, to communicate the knowledge of their labours and of their diſcoveries. This zeal,

highly commendable, no doubt, is likewiſe extremely natural. In truth, when a man has had the courage to caſt himſelf away, if I may uſe the expreſſion, in countries remote, uninhabited, or, what is ſtill worſe, inhabited by nations whoſe rude or half-formed civilization is infinitely more dangerous than the ſtate even of ſavage humanity; when he has been endowed with a vigor capable of ſurmounting obſtacles, with the perſeverance neceſſary to overcome the difficulties which obſtruct his path at every ſtep, and with the fortitude which ſupports amidſt the ills phyſical and moral to which enterpriſes of this kind are neceſſarily expoſed; when, in a word, talents, experience or good fortune have extricated him out of dangers and diſtreſſes innumerable; there is, it muſt be acknowledged, a ſatisfaction, a real enjoyment in retracing the various events which excited powerful emotions during his progreſs, the obſtructions, the fatigues, the hazards which by turns attacked or threatened the very exiſtence of the traveller; for if it be pleaſant to call to remembrance calamities which are paſt, it is ſtill more ſo to relate them.

If to theſe motives purely perſonal, but which, nevertheleſs, rarely fail to awaken a general intereſt, the man who has devoted himſelf to the dangers of tedious peregrinations, unites views more exalted, conſiderations more powerful; if, tranſported with the

the love of glory, or, which is the ſame thing, with the love of public good, he has been ſufficiently happy to extend the ſphere of knowledge, and to add new realms to the empire of ſcience, it becomes a ſacred duty to give an account of his progreſs, and delay or neglect become equally reprehenſible. My own pen has apparently recorded the ſentence of ſelf-condemnation; for amidſt the incredible number of men and things reviewed during the courſe of twelve years of travelling and obſervation, my collection muſt of neceſſity contain many intereſting objects, and ſome of theſe entirely new. I cannot complain of want of encouragement. Friends, whom letters and the ſciences have rendered illuſtrious, preſſed me to publiſh my travels; and Buffon, who deemed mine worthy of being aſſociated with his own immortal labours; Buffon, that Coloſſus of eloquence and philoſophy, wrote to me in theſe terms, in 1781: "I can "have no doubt that you muſt be poſſeſſed of "many excellent obſervations, the publication of "which would redound greatly to your honor."

But I enjoyed not the liberty of devoting myſelf to an employment which requires compoſure, and ſerenity of mind. How far, alas! have I been from taſting the delicious fruits of tranquillity! Nature had, if I may venture to ſay ſo, diſtinctly marked my deſtination. With an ardent imagination, a

thirſt after ſcience, a paſſion for diſcovery, the coolneſs of intrepidity; with a phyſical conſtitution fit to encounter every hardſhip, I ſeemed to be formed for enterprizes the moſt hazardous, for the execution of projects the moſt uncommon; and when, after a long courſe of trial in this way, though ſtill in the prime of life, I returned to my native country, that ſame Nature who has allotted to each of us his particular diſpoſition, ſeemed to puniſh me for chooſing a ſtate of retirement, and, at the ſame time to accuſe a government which ſcarcely ever underſtood how to place men in the poſt adapted to them, or to do itſelf honor by making a ſelection unſullied by venality or intrigue. That robuſt temperament which had withſtood the burning heat of an African climate, the boiling humidity of the equator, in South America; which no exceſs of fatigue and privation was able to ſubdue, ſunk under the languor of repoſe. One violent malady ſucceeded another; a gloomy melancholy occupied the place of mental activity, and a painful agitation of ſoul followed cloſe upon the ſalutary agitation of the body. An abſence of ſome years had ſtimulated a covetous diſpoſition in certain of my relations. In order to recover what they had robbed me of, I was obliged to find my way into what was then denominated the ſanctuary of Juſtice, but which proved to be, in reality, the labyrinth of chicane, the walls of which, briſtled on all ſides with ſharp hooks,

loaded

loaded themſelves with the ſpoils of thoſe who had the temerity to venture in. On the other hand, men, who have often made me regret the inſincerity of moſt of the eaſtern nations, the depredations of the Arabs; men, among whom a female has been ſeen to figure, the reproach of her ſex and the diſgrace of human nature; men, beings maleficent and dangerous, of whom ſociety furniſhes but too many examples, and whom, for the ſake of public proſperity, it would be of importance to unmaſk; the M.....s, the U.....s, the Lef.....s, and other ſubaltern knaves, taking advantage of my inexperience in buſineſs, of my careleſſneſs about pecuniary intereſts, of the frankneſs, the confidence, the ſimplicity of a character generous, but credulous to a fault, involved me in a thouſand embarraſſments, overwhelmed me with tricks, and quirks, and wranglings, and ſhameleſs plunderers, contrived to divide among themſelves the tattered remnants of my fortune, after tearing it in pieces, and tormenting, perſecuting me day after day, till I was ready to ſink under vexation and diſappointment.*

* "We find but too frequently that when an honeſt man "happens to be involved in a diſpute with a raſcal, the raſcal "meets with powerful protectors, becauſe the honeſt man ſa-"tisfies himſelf with being honeſt, whereas the raſcal is ſup-"ple, flattering, inſinuating; the meaneſt conceſſions coſt him "nothing; he does whatever is required of him; the honeſt "man does that only which he ought to do." *(Hiſtorical Eſſays on Paris, by Sainte-Foix*, vol. vi.)

Amidſt ſo many cauſes of diſguſt, amidſt convulſions too violent to be endured by a ſenſibility which promiſed to be the charm of my life, but which has proved it's bane; amidſt diſtractions ſo ſerious and ſo mortifying, how was it poſſible to engage in an undertaking that required undivided attention? Where was the poſſibility of ſurmounting difficulties of another kind, which aroſe out of the very nature of the work? Twelve years employed in traverſing diſtant regions may, it is acknowledged, furniſh a large ſtock of information, and extend the field of experience; but this intenſeneſs of application does not conſtitute the talent of writing, and the proſecution of this ſpecies of expedition is far from being favourable to the formation of the ſcholar. Familiarized to the image of perſonal deſtruction which the perils of every day are inceſſantly preſenting to him, a prey to unremitting fatigue, preſſed by wants which recur almoſt without a moment's interval, the man who devotes himſelf to the buſineſs of travelling, ought to ſet out with a ſoul encompaſſed by a three-fold rampart, to ſhelter him from fear and depreſſion. Frequently intermixed with barbarous and ferocious men, he is ſometimes obliged to employ the ſervices of ſavage natures which he is unable to reſtrain; to theſe he muſt communicate a portion of his own intrepidity, and as it is not always eaſy to make an impreſſion on groſs and

irony

ſtrony characters, in order to rouſe them, he feels himſelf at times conſtrained to borrow their language. Theſe circumſtances taken together leave an impreſs of harſhneſs, which, to delicate eyes, preſents an appearance bordering on vulgarity, and which exerts an irreſiſtible influence on the ſtyle. Beſides, the efforts made to acquire the capacity of ſpeaking foreign languages, imperceptibly make a man forget his own; and with all this, no reſource in the conſolations of literature, not ſo much as leiſure to direct the thoughts toward a ſubject of that deſcription. Such are the embarraſſments in which I muſt probably have felt myſelf entangled, and out of which I muſt have extricated myſelf, had I written the hiſtory of my travels immediately on their termination. If the traveller is the hiſtorian of the men he meets on his way, he is at the ſame time the hiſtorian of Nature; and, in order to do her the juſtice ſhe deſerves, he ought to be able to paint her in full dreſs, as in her noble ſimplicity.

Perhaps I may be miſtaken, but I am diſpoſed to think that, in the laſt mentioned reſpect, my work will have gained a great deal by the delay of publication, and that I ſhall have reaſon to applaud myſelf on having complied with Montaigne's precept, addreſſed to authors: "Let them think ſe-"riouſly of the matter before they publiſh; who is "hurrying them?" (*Eſſays*, book iii. ch. 9.)

Egypt, that ancient cradle of the ſciences, where the wonders of art and thoſe of nature contended for the prize of admiration, has been the object of philoſophic excurſion in ancient as in modern times. From Herodotus * down to Volney, writers of equal celebrity, the multiplied details reſpecting a country, of which the ſurface of the whole globe preſents no parallel, demonſtrate the curioſity which it generally excited. But this frequence of travellers cannot exclude my pretenſion to a place among the reſt, and I am not to be deterred from ſpeaking of Egypt by the number or renown of thoſe who have trodden the ground before me. Barbariſm and ruins have ſucceeded to the inſtitutions and the monuments of antiquity; and the difficulty attending the proſecution of reſearch, and of making obſervations, has not permitted modern travellers to examine every thing. There remained after them, as there will ſtill remain after me, many objects, if not to be ſeen, at leaſt to be ſeen well. Beſides, objects do not preſent themſelves to all obſervers under the ſame point of view.

* M. Sonnini might have produced an authority at leaſt as reſpectable as that of Herodotus, and of ſtill higher antiquity. To Moſes, the Lawgiver of the Hebrews, mankind is indebted for the earlieſt, moſt authentic and moſt intereſting memoirs of ancient Egypt, and he knew the country much better than any traveller who has written ſince his time. But a reference to Scripture would have degraded and ſullied the pure and philoſophic page of a French republican.—H.H.

And

And juſt as every painter has his particular touch and mode of colouring, which animate ſubjects, already treated, with the graces of novelty, the traveller who carries with him his own manner of obſerving, has likewiſe in his narratives his peculiar mode of expreſſion; and it is from this combination of paintings that we are to expect the perfect knowledge of a country ſo intereſting, and the more ſo that, it being impoſſible to know every thing, each particular traveller applies himſelf in preference to the particular object of his reſearch. Directed by his taſte, and ſometimes by an enthuſiaſtic impulſe, he relates every minute particular connected with his darling purſuit, and overlooks what is foreign to it. The botaniſt, accordingly, in many caſes, ſees plants only; the zoologiſt, nothing but animals; the antiquarian, nothing but ruins; the naturaliſt, only the phenomena of nature; the merchant, only the means of extending commerce and increaſing his fortune; while the politician confines his attention to the relative ſituation of country to country. One ſcorns to deſcend into detail, and preſents the reſults of his obſervation in a maſs; whereas another dwells with minute exactneſs on particulars; one ſometimes ſacrifices accuracy to elegance of deſcription, or to copiouſneſs of expreſſion; and another, a ſcrupulous obſerver, but dull and deſtitute of genius, communicates

communicates the dryneſs of his ſubject to his manner of treating it.

A ſtriking example, among thouſands that might be produced, of this predilection, againſt which a man cannot be too much on his guard, is to be found in the travels of Frederic Haſſelquitz. This pupil of Linnæus, a moſt zealous inquirer, but excluſively attached to the ſtudy of natural hiſtory, being at Grand Cairo, wiſhed to viſit the pyramids of Memphis; but being arrived at the foot of thoſe monuments, equally renowned for their enormous ſize and their antiquity, he ſoon withdrew his attention from them, and fixed it entirely on the *formicæ-leones* which ſwarm in the ſands of that diſtrict. Inſects engroſſed all his powers of thought, and one of the moſt aſtoniſhing works of all antiquity excited no emotion in his breaſt. "The pyramids," ſays he, "magnificent "as they are, make a ſlighter impreſſion on the "mind of a connoiſſeur in natural hiſtory than the "induſtry of thoſe puny animals."*

The generality of mankind will not give into the opinion of the Swediſh naturaliſt, of whom, to

* Travels in the Levant, by Fred. Haſſelquitz, publiſhed by Linnæus, and tranſlated from the German at Paris, 1769, part I. p. 107.

ſay

ſay nothing of the extravagance of the compariſon, it may be obſerved, that it was hardly worth the while to march ſo far as to the plains of Memphis to hang with rapture over a neſt of ants, ſo common in other countries, Europe not excepted; and that a traveller expoſes himſelf to ridicule, when, attached ſolely to a favourite object, he follows too cloſely the letter of the proverb, *ne ſutor ultra crepidam.*

It is farther to be remarked, that few French travellers have penetrated into Upper Egypt. No one of them who, in modern times, have acquired celebrity, proſecuted his reſearches beyond the plain of Saccara, that is beyond the vicinity of Cairo. Savary himſelf, who has publiſhed two volumes on the ſubject of Upper Egypt, never travelled a ſingle foot in it, and the tone of aſſurance with which he ſpeaks of the country, and the detail of his journey through it, as if he had really performed it, are a ſtain on the reputation of that elegant writer. I knew Savary well. I have ſeen him at Alexandria, in the iſland of Candia, and afterwards in France. The merited ſucceſs of the firſt volume of his letters on Egypt, and he intended to go no farther, as it contained the only parts of that country which he had viſited, actually intoxicated him. He took it into his head to add to it the hiſtory of a journey never undertaken, and found himſelf reduced to the neceſſity of extracting

tracting from, and copying Herodotus, Strabo, Diodorus Siculus and others. More fortunate than Savary and many others, I had it in my power to traverse the *Saïd*, for this is the given name by the Arabs to Upper Egypt, from ancient Cairo up to Assouan, and this consideration will perhaps render my work somewhat interesting.

But what interest more powerful in favour of travels through Egypt can be imagined, than to reflect that it is no longer in the hands of the Mamelucs who oppressed it, that the French, in breaking asunder the brazen yoke under which lived in a state of brutal subjection the descendants of the most illustrious nation of antiquity, present to them, together with the gift of liberty, the means of recovering illumination and the sciences, the first domain of their ancestors! Egypt such as I paint it, will soon cease to be what I saw it. An immense space of time is going to elapse in a few days, and not long hence, nay during my own life-time, I shall be only an ancient traveller, as those of antiquity at present are with respect to us. So many prodigies were reserved for the greatest nation in the universe. Cities shall rise again out of their rubbish; the monuments, to which all approach was interdicted by ferocious usurpers, are going at length to become objects of inspection; those which ignorance and barbarism took pains to annihilate,

nihilate, ſhall be reſtored to their ancient luſtre, while others ſhall re-appear which now lie buried in the ſand. The image of ſplendor ſhall every where reſume the place of the hideous picture of deſtruction. Science is about to advance with the pace of a giant. Canals, that copious ſource of proſperity, are going to be cut or repaired. The commerce of the world will naturally fall back into its ancient channel; and what the Pharaohs, in the plenitude of their power, were afraid to undertake, the junction of the two ſeas, Frenchmen, conducted by a new Alexander, whom victory and the ſciences are emulous to crown, ſhall preſent to the aſtoniſhment and admiration of future ages. The mind is loſt and confounded in contemplating that immenſity of glory with which the French nation is encircling itſelf. Proud of belonging to it, I feel an additional ſatisfaction in being able to conſecrate to my country the fruit of my labours.*

* As our Author had ſuppreſſed the hiſtory of his travels for twice nine years, he would perhaps have acted prudently in ſuppreſſing his prediction concerning the approaching ſtate of Egypt, till events had given him a firmer foundation whereon to reſt them. The Gallic expedition to that country is aſſuredly of very uncertain iſſue. The vain-glory of a Frenchman is truly ridiculous, and the idea of the French nation giving liberty, happineſs and the means of illumination to the countries which they overrun as a peſtilence, is an inſult to the common-ſenſe of mankind. It merits the ſilent ſmile of indignation and contempt.—H. H.

CHAP.

CHAP. II.

Buffon—Departure from Montbard—Coral—Troglodyte—Languedoc—Phalangiſte—Preſervation of Fiſhes—Pleaſant Anecdote—Gulf of Lions.

ON returning from my ſecond voyage to America, I repaired to Montbard, where Buffon had expreſſed a wiſh to ſee me. In this retreat I paſſed the greateſt part of ſix months; and that period, which fled away with too much rapidity, is aſſuredly the portion of my life which has furniſhed memory with the moſt precious recollections. To my abode at that temple of taſte and the ſciences I am indebted for the little I am worth. They were the winter months, and the ſeverity of the weather ſecured us from intruders. My days flowed there in a delicious ſucceſſion, in the ſervice and ſocicty of the great man; charming ſociety, which no inequality of temper ever ruffled, and which I have no where ſince found! Buffon was not of the number of thoſe men of letters whom Eraſmus humorouſly compares to the huge figures in Flemiſh tapeſtry, which, to produce their effect, muſt be viewed at a diſtance. His converſation was as agreeable as intereſting, and he blended in it an eaſy gaiety, a tone of good-nature which put all around him

him at their eaſe. To theſe ſocial qualities he united all the graces of a fine perſon; he was, like Plato, of the moſt commanding and robuſt ſtature: broad ſhoulders announced his ſtrength; his forehead was elevated and majeſtic, and he commanded obſervation by the elegance of his deportment, and the dignity of his movements.* But he had beſides, what moſt of the ancients wanted, that attention to his perſon, and that elegant neatneſs of dreſs, which indicate attention and deference to others.

Government had appointed M. Tott inſpector of the ſea-ports of the Levant and of the Barbary Coaſt, and had iſſued orders to equip a frigate in the harbour of Toulon, to carry him to the place of his deſtination. I was commanded to embark on board the ſame ſhip, and to keep by her through the expedition. But my orders were afterwards countermanded; I left the ſhip at Alexandria, to purſue my travels through Egypt. I parted with

* *Erat et ſpecioſiſſimo & robuſtiſſimo corporis habitu. Undè et a latis humeris, amplâ fronte & egregio totius corporis habitu, orationis vi & ubertate, Plato nuncupatus eſt.* He poſſeſſed the moſt elegant and robuſt figure. Hence, with the advantage of broad ſhoulders, a large forehead and complete ſymmetry of perſon, accompanied by an uncommon force and copiouſneſs of ſpeech, he obtained the name of Plato. *(Life of Plato by Marſilius Ficinus.)*

Buffon

Buffon at Montbard, after receiving from him kind wiſhes and embraces which I valued as the benediction of genius. The poſt conveyed me with its uſual rapidity to Marſeilles, where I ſtopped only a few moments.

A certain perſon had formed the project of digging through a hill in the neighbourhood of Ciotat, down to the ſea, the waters of which, in various places of the coaſt, force themſelves through immenſe cavities a conſiderable way up the land. He pretended that theſe ſubterranean cavities contained an immenſe quantity of coral, the eaſy attainment of which would conſiderably increaſe that branch of commerce, and enrich the projector. Memorials on the ſubject had been addreſſed to Verſailles, in the view of obtaining permiſſion and aſſiſtance. The miniſter conſulted Buffon, who tranſmitted the memorials to me, that I might make the neceſſary enquiries on the ſpot. On my arrival at Ciotat I found the enterprize already relinquiſhed; the work had been given up almoſt as ſoon as it began, and it was thought of no more.

I was informed at Ciotat of a ſingular ceremony practiſed there every year, the firſt days of *nivôſe*. A numerous aſſemblage of men, armed with ſabres and piſtols, ſally forth in purſuit of a very ſmall bird

bird called by the ancients troglodyte, a name which Guenau de Montbeillard continues to give it in the natural hiſtory of birds.* When they have found it, which is no difficult matter, for care is taken to have one always ready, they ſuſpend it on the middle of a long pole which two men carry on their ſhoulders, as if it were a heavy load. This whimſical proceſſion parades thus through the ſtreets of the city; they weigh the bird on a ſtrong balance, and afterwards ſit down at table to divert themſelves. The name given there to the troglodyte is not leſs whimſical than the ſpecies of feſtival which it occaſions. They call it *putois* (polecat) or *woodcock's* father, on account of the reſemblance of its plumage to that of the woodcock, which they there allege to be generated by the polecat, a great deſtroyer of the feathered race, but not the producer of any one.

On returning to Marſeilles, I ſtopped at Caſſis, where there are two manufactures in which coral is poliſhed and worked up; the greateſt part of this commodity is exported to the coaſt of Africa, and exchanged for human beings. The vineyards which ſurround this little city produce a white wine, which is held in conſiderable eſtimation.

* *Motacilla troglodytes.* Lin. Syſt. Nat.

It was known at Marſeilles, that it would require ſome time to complete the armament of the frigate fitting out at Toulon. I propoſed to make an excurſion into Languedoc, and, accompanied by M. Tott's ſecretary, travelled by land to Cette, of which Vernet has painted a ſuperb view. In the courſe of my walks round the city I picked up ſome volcanic ſubſtances, and along the ſhore a variety of ſhells and other marine productions. I was aſtoniſhed to find on the very brink of the ſea, and in the humid ſea-weed, a ſingular ſpecies of ſcarab, very rare in the north of France, and which has been decorated with the name of *phalangiſte*,* becauſe it is pretended that the long points of his corſlet have ſome reſemblance to the pikes with which the ſoldiers of the Macedonian phalanx were armed. This is what the partiſans of method in natural hiſtory call vulgar names. And what a ſtrange vulgar name is that which, in order to be underſtood, requires the moſt exact knowledge of antiquity! Linnæus has denominated the ſame inſect the giant *Typhæus*,† which aſſuredly has nothing vulgar in it, and which ſeems but indifferently deſcriptive of a ſcarab a few lines in length, and

* Geoffroi, Hiſt. abrégée des inſectes des environs de Paris, tom. I. p. 72, plate V. fig. 3.

† *Scarabæus Typhæus*, Lin. Syſt. Nat.—Fabricius, Spec. Inſect. p. 10.

whoſe

whoſe nature it is to neſtle under the excrement of animals.

Thoſe whoſe taſte leads them to make collections of natural hiſtory, well know how difficult it is to preſerve the colours of fiſhes. Drawn out of the fluid in which they live, deprived of the moiſture without which they cannot exiſt, they ſoon loſe, together with life, the luſtre and reflexes of their ſcales; their diſcoloured ſkin aſſumes a livid and tawny hue, and, in our cabinets, they no longer preſerve that appearance of life, which ſeems ſtill to animate other claſſes of animals. Every thing that appeared to me of poſſible attainment in this way, I found in the poſſeſſion of M. Bories, doctor of medicine at Cette. He had devoted his attention to natural hiſtory, and particularly to the preparation of fiſhes, and the ſpecimens which he had collected ſtill retained, if not the brilliancy, at leaſt a part of the colours of animated nature. This naturaliſt made a ſecret to me of his method of preſervation; promiſing at the ſame time to communicate it to Buffon, on condition of certain arrangements. I know not what has reſulted from the correſpondence which I was at pains to eſtabliſh between them.

We viſited, on one ſide, the baths of Balaruc, and, on the other, the vineyards of Frontignan,

which produce that ſpirituous and high-flavoured liquor, exceſs in which has, oftener than once, conducted the drinker to the hot bath.

We wiſhed likewiſe to look at Montpellier, and made that excurſion along the fineſt road I ever ſaw in France.

At laſt time preſſed our return to the coaſt of Provence, and we reſolved to go by ſea. We agreed for our paſſage with the maſter of one of the tartans then in the port of Cette. As we waited, at our inn, for the hour fixed for ſailing, the maſter arrived, out of breath, to inform us, that M. the commandant of the city, deſired our attendance at his houſe, where ſeveral other perſons, who were to embark on board the ſame tartan, had already aſſembled. He ſignified to me that M. the commandant was highly diſpleaſed with me in particular, becauſe that being an officer, I was leaving Cette without his permiſſion.

Though it was in my power to have refuſed ſubmiſſion to a pretenſion ſo ſingular, we went to the commandant's. He was an officer of invalids, his name *Quérelle*, (Quarrel). Immediately addreſſing himſelf to me, he ſaid: "I am aſtoniſhed, Sir, that "you have not paid me a viſit; I would have in-"vited you to eat ſoup with me."—"Sir," replied I, "you

I, "you will readily forgive a ſtranger, a traveller, "an officer who has no connection with the mi- "litary land-ſervice, for being ignorant of your "exiſtence, however important it may be, and "ſoups are not among the objects of my purſuit." "That is enough, Sir," reſumed M. Quérelle, ſomewhat diſconcerted, "you may go whenever "you pleaſe; as to all theſe people," added he with a tone of dignity, turning round to my fellow paſſengers, "let them go, I don't concern myſelf "with them." We took our leave, laughing heartily at this little adventure, the analogy of which with the name of the commandant was ſo ſtriking.

The wind had ſprung up, the ſea was in a ſtate of agitation, the ſky overclouded; every thing announced the approach of foul weather. Our maſter diſcovered little inclination to leave the harbour; he yielded nevertheleſs to my importunity, and we ſet ſail, while the other tartans kept ſnug in port, though it had been agreed that we ſhould ſail in company. The night was tempeſtuous, and a very heavy ſea made our little bark to labour exceedingly. It is well known how dangerous navigation is in that part of the Mediterranean into which the Rhone precipitates itſelf. Hence it has obtained the appellation of *Golfe de Lion* (*mare Leonis*, Lion's gulf), being, thus to expreſs myſelf, terrible and cruel from the miſeries which

the mariner has there to encounter, and the frequent ſhipwrecks ſuffered, and not, as is commonly imagined, from the name of the city Lyons, which is at a conſiderable diſtance from thoſe ſeas. We ſuffered nothing, however, except ſome moments of anxiety, and reached the harbour of Marſeilles without meeting any accident. I ſet out immediately for Toulon.

CHAP.

CHAP. III.

Departure from Toulon—Come to an anchor—Coaſt of Corſica—Genoa—The Opera—Elba and the adjacent Iſlands—Gale of wind—Arrival at Palermo.

AT ten o'clock of the evening of April 26th, 1777, the frigate *Atalanta*, one of the fineſt in the French navy, ſet ſail from the road of Toulon. She was under the command of M. Durfort, her crew conſiſted of near three hundred ſeamen, and ſhe mounted thirty-two cannon. Some perſons from Verſailles, Monſieur and Madame Teſſé M. d'Ayen, M. Meung, had obtained permiſſion to embark with us, and were to be carried to Palermo, to Malta and Syracuſe. Theſe perſons were formerly denominated the *Great*; but they had diveſted themſelves of the pride of courts, and were become very agreeable people. Madame Teſſé, one of the wittieſt women of her day, gave the tone to this little colony of courtiers; and the politeneſs, the frank and graceful probity of the commander, the ſelect character of the other officers, rendered the company on board the Atalanta, the moſt amiable ſociety that can be imagined, and ſuch as could hardly be expected at ſea. M. Tott, for his part,

had with him an officer of cavalry, and a counſellor of the Chatelet, a whimſical aſſociation, and worthy of its author. Citizen Venture, the learned interpreter of the oriental languages, and who is now with the army of Egypt, was likewiſe embarked on this expedition. It was no eaſy matter to find accommodation for ſo much company; it was found neceſſary to diſmount the four ſternmoſt guns, to make cabins on deck, and the powder-room was ſo encumbered with temporary beds, that it was impoſſible to turn about in it.

We ſailed with a fair wind, but this was of no long continuance. It preſently became contrary, and blew furiouſly from the eaſt. The heavens, covered with thick clouds, poured down an inceſſant torrent of rain. On the morning of next day, ſeveral kinds of birds were ſeen flying round the veſſel. I diſtinguiſhed among them turtle-doves, ſmall ring-collared plovers, and one blongios. Some of thoſe birds perched on the rigging, and were ſo fatigued and ſtunned with the tempeſt, that ſeveral plovers* were caught by the hand, and the ſpecies of crab-eater† known by the name of blongios.

* *Pluvier a collier*, Buffon, Hiſt. Nat. des Oiſ. & *petit pluvier a collier* des plan. enlum. No. 921. *Charadrius hiaticula*, Lin.

† *Blongios*, Buffon, Hiſt. Nat. des Oiſ. & *blongios de Suiſſe*, pl. enlum. No. 328. *Ardea minuta*, Lin.

After

After having to no purpoſe endeavoured to ply to windward by tacking, we were under the neceſſity of looking out for ſhelter, and came to an anchor, at two o'clock in the afternoon of the very next day after our departure, in the road of Vignettes, in the bay of Toulon. The coaſt near which the frigate was moored is bold; its cultivation extremely varied, the baſtides* meeting the eye from diſtance to diſtance, the ſmiling aſpect which it preſents, form an agreeable contraſt with the arid and grayiſh mountains which riſe behind, and form the back ground of the picture. On the declivity of ſome of thoſe mountains, nevertheleſs, feed the excellent ſheep of the vicinity of Toulon, on nutrimental and odoriferous plants. The ſtrawberries which we found there, in great abundance, were the fineſt flavoured I ever taſted.

The chaſe, which we could not purſue too far from the veſſel, procured us only a few quails already on their return from emigration. We likewiſe ſaw the lapwing there, and I ſhot a yellow wagtail,† and a ſmall bird of a ſpecies never deſcribed before Buffon, and which he calls *gavoüé*,

* This is the name given, in the ſouthern departments, to the ſmall country ſeats built by wealthy individuals, in the neighbourhood of cities.

† Buffon, Hiſt. Nat. des Oiſ. & pl. enlum. No. 28. fig. 1. *Motacilla baarula*. Lin.

from

from the name *chic-gavotte*, which it bears in the part of the country formerly denominated Provence, where it is likewiſe known by the name of *chic-mouſtache*, from the black fillets which ſurround the bill.* Theſe laſt birds fly about in pairs amidſt the ſhrubbery, in the cultivated fields which ſurround the baſtides; they are far from being wild, and their flight is ſhort, not very lofty, and a good deal reſembling that of the ſparrow.

The impetuoſity of the eaſt-wind continued to increaſe till it blew quite a ſtorm, and we dropped a ſecond anchor. We remained in this ſtate till the 2d of May, when the wind coming round to the north-weſt permitted us to weigh.

At day-break, the 3d of May, we perceived the iſland of Corſica at the diſtance of ſix or ſeven leagues, and as we approached, had an opportunity of examining the coaſts of it. Thoſe which lie between cape Calvi and cape Corſe, the northermoſt of the iſland, are lofty mountains, of a barren and rocky appearance, with deep inciſions. The mountains of cape Calvi, under the ſhelter of which is a large and ſafe harbour, are the higheſt on this part of the coaſt, their ſummits

* Buffon, Hiſt. Niſt. des Oiſ. art. *Gavoüé* & pl. enlum. No. 626, fig. 1. *Gavoüé de Provence.*—*Muſtacoe Bunting*, Latham, ſin. ii, p. 175.—*Emberiſa provincialis*. Lin.

were

were ſtill covered with ſnow. We likewiſe deſcried, in the gulf formed between the capes Corſe and Calvi, Red-iſland, *iſola Roſſa*, a ſmall low-lying iſland which guards a deep and important haven againſt weſterly winds.

We ſaw a great many porpoiſes* or blowers, playing on the ſurface of the ſea, an almoſt certain preſage of foul weather. In fact, it was now impoſſible for us to make Corſica, or to continue our courſe, the wind having again become contrary, and blowing a tempeſt; we came to the reſolution of ſtopping at Genoa, where we arrived May 4th at ten o'clock in the morning.

It will not be expected, ſurely, that I ſhould give a deſcription of the city of Genoa: it is ſufficiently known, eſpecially of late years, to diſpenſe with my ſpeaking on the ſubject. I ſhall only relate a trifling incident, in which we were the principal performers. Though apparently of no importance, it furniſhes a trait of national characters, and for that very reaſon merits a place in the narration of a traveller.

Two female dancers held the firſt rank in the ballets of the opera at Genoa; both had the advantages of youth and beauty; both were poſſeſſed of

* *Delphinus phocæna*, Lin.

equal

equal agility. But the Graces directed the movements and the attitudes of the one, whereas the ſteps and ſkips of the other, more ſurpriſing from their nimbleneſs, were, after all, mere exertions of bodily ſtrength. The public applauſe was, however, excluſively reſerved for this laſt, while the former was received with indifference. It belonged to Frenchmen to give leſſons of taſte, it belonged to them to avenge the inſulted Graces. We concerted meaſures together, and the officers and paſſengers divided themſelves into ſeveral parties on the next repreſentation. As ſoon as the actreſs whom we had determined to patronize appeared on the ſtage, we received her with a burſt of applauſe decidedly expreſſed. Some Genoeſe joined in it; but the clamor, the clapping of hands, the ſtriking of canes of by far the great majority of the ſpectators, enſured victory to the other performer, in ſpite of all our murmuring. We were not however diſconcerted. Next day we called in more auxiliaries, and exerted ourſelves to make as much noiſe as poſſible. Our opponents were not a whit behind us; but as we were diſperſed over every part of the houſe, we daily brought over freſh proſelytes. This ſtruggle excited ſome apprehenſion in the ſenate, and an order was iſſued prohibiting all diſturbance at the opera. We raiſed none; but at the opening of the ballet, an uproar aroſe which ſtunned the ear. Guards were ſtationed up and

down

down the theatre: we were not greatly diſquieted at this. At length, after five or ſix repreſentations, during which the oppoſition gradually diminiſhed, we had the ſatisfaction to ſee our principles generally adopted. The actreſs who, before our arrival, had conſtantly been received with unbounded applauſe, ceaſed to enjoy the public approbation, which was all transferred to her whom we protected. Satisfied with this triumph, which was that of good taſte, we gave an entertainment on board the frigate to both the ladies. She whoſe ſucceſs we had interrupted accepted with a very good grace, and we did every thing in our power to compenſate the ſlight reverſe of reputation which we procured her.

At this ſame ſpectacle it was that I ſaw, for the firſt time, thoſe degraded beings who have nothing of man but the exterior. Sacrificed to the improvement of the loveliеſt of arts, they acquire, at the expenſe of their very exiſtence, a voice ſonorous, melodious, but which is totally out of nature, as it is neither the voice of a man nor of a woman. France has not ſullied itſelf with ſuch a crime. Unknown likewiſe to moſt of the nations of Europe, it was reſerved for prieſts beyond the Alps, the men, in whoſe hands excommunication was a piece of armour ſo harmleſs, that they diſcharged it in ſeaſon, out of ſeaſon, theſe men ſhuddered not at the thought of compoſing choirs deſtined to ſing the

the praiſes of Deity, and to make the arches of his temple reſound with the harmonious accents of wretched victims whom, by a refinement in barbariſm, they had expunged from the liſt of men. But, what is hardly credible, this idea of mutilation originated in the head of a woman. A celebrated queen of antiquity, Semiramis, who by her riches, her power, her victories, and the luſtre of her reign, was exalted to the higheſt rank of human beings, Semiramis is the firſt who ſet the example of a cruelty which is a blot on the page of hiſtory.

Pacherotti, whom Brydone had ſeen not long before on the ſtage of Palermo, and whoſe talents he celebrates,* was then at Genoa. Notwithſtanding the vehement elogium pronounced on that ſongſter by the Engliſh traveller, I thought him far beneath the high reputation he had gained. His voice was indeed full of ſweetneſs, but his mode of playing was ſpiritleſs, and his delivery totally deſtitute of warmth: he was a thing to be heard and not ſeen. His countenance, his geſtures, though he was young and handſome, wore the appearance of conſtraint, of imbecillity, which diſgraced his ſinging. He otherwiſe fulfilled all that was to be expected of him. In truth, the energy of action, the fire of expreſſion, which can flow

* Travels to Sicily and Malta, Demeunier's tranſlation, tom. ii. p. 146, 147 and 200.

only

only from that of feeling, were incompatible with his ſtate of degradation.

After having been detained, by contrary winds, ten whole days in the port of Genoa, we took our departure from it May 13th at ſix in the morning, with a good breeze of wind from the north-eaſt, and rapidly increaſed our diſtance from the elevated and ſmiling ſhores of this part of Italy. Behind us, the maritime Alps preſented a vaſt amphitheatre whitened with eternal ſnows. The lofty mountains which ſkirt the gulf of *la Specia*, and which the French ſeamen pronounce *l'Eſpezie*, appeared in view; their ſummit was covered with ſnow, and they appeared to me arid, and formed of rocks cut perpendicularly. They are the quarries that principally furniſh the fine marbles of every ſpecies which we import from Italy. We paſſed, on our left, the iſland of *Gorgona*, which is ſubject to the Duke of Tuſcany. It is of ſmall extent; it's form is rounded, and it's mountains, which render it viſible a great way off, ſeem to be of the ſame nature with the adjacent coaſt. We afterwards ſteered between cape Corſe and *Capraria*, a ſmall iſland vulgarly called *Cabraire*, belonging to the republic of Genoa. It is nothing but a rock almoſt entirely barren, but containing, nevertheleſs, habitations which furniſh very excellent ſailors.

On

On the 14th, the wind having become unfavourable, we plied to windward between Corſica and the iſle of Elba, one of the poſſeſſions of the king of Naples. It contains two good harbours and quarries of marble; but it is particularly famous for it's iron mines, and it's forges, in which the manufacture of that mineral is conducted through a proceſs which has been deſcribed by Tronçon-du-Coudrai, a captain of artillery. This proceſs is more economical, more expeditious, and at the ſame time more beneficial than that of the furnaces generally employed for ſmelting in the reſt of Europe; and it produces iron equivalent to the beſt Swediſh, as to toughneſs and ductility, and more in quantity than from the ordinary forges, without any increaſe of expenſe. The mines of iron, and thoſe of loadſtone, with which the iſle of Elba is impregnated, render the approach to it perceptible by navigators, from the variation which the compaſs there undergoes.

That part of the coaſt of Corſica, comprehended between cape Corſe and Baſtia, is of a ſimilar nature with that which is oppoſite to it, and of which I have made mention, in other words, it is formed of ſteep mountains, ſome of which, thoſe of greateſt elevation, were ſtill covered with ſnow. The city of Baſtia preſented to us an agreeable appearance: it is ſituated on the declivity of a hill: it's port

cannot

cannot admit ſhips of war, but is very commodious for veſſels of ſmall draught of water.

Towards noon, having got a fair wind, we paſſed cloſe by *Monte-Chriſto*, a barren and deſert rock, ſituated to the ſouth, at no great diſtance from the iſle of Elba, from which it appears to have been detached by ſome one of the mighty convulſions that have not been unfrequent in thoſe ſeas. The line which united theſe two iſlands may ſtill be traced, by the *Planoſa* (*Planouſe*, or *île Plate*, Flat Iſland), a ridge of rock ſcarcely appearing above the water's edge, and reaching from the one to the other. I was informed that this laſt mentioned ridge is the reſort of a great quantity of ſea-calves and ſeals.

We ſaw aſtern of the ſhip a flock of *Petrels*, known to navigators by the name of birds of ſtorm.* It was about three o'clock in the afternoon when they firſt came near us, the weather was fine, the wind at ſouth-eaſt, and almoſt calm. But about ſeven o'clock the wind came round to the ſouth-weſt, and blew furiouſly. The ſky was overclouded and lowering, the night ſet in extremely dark, and repeated flaſhes of lightning increaſed the horror of it; there was a dreadful ſwell in the ſea, and

* Oiſeau de tempete. Buffon, Hiſt. Nat. des Oiſ. & pl. enlum. No. 993.—*Procellaria pelagica*. Lin.

we were at laſt obliged to lie to all night under our courſes.* This gale laſted till noon of the 15th. We were then off the mouths of Boniface, that is, the ſtrait which ſeparates the iſlands of Corſica and Sardinia, and along a coaſt of from twelve to fifteen leagues. It is hardly poſſible to navigate in thoſe ſeas, without encountering ſtormy weather. The ſea, repelled in contrary directions by a vaſt extent of coaſt, and by numerous ridges of rocks and quickſands, agitated by the winds, the direction of which is liable to frequent change from a multitude of ſtraits, is there uſually ſwelling and tumultuous. During the foul weather of the morning, the turtle-doves and quails, in expectation of finding an aſylum from the tempeſt on board the veſſel, ventured to alight on her. But this inhoſpitable retreat ſaved not theſe unfortunate travellers from death; they all ſuffered themſelves to be caught by the hand, ſo fatigued were they, or confounded by the tremendous uproar of the elements in which they were involved. I obſerved that the turtle-doves arrived in pairs. Shoals innumerable of porpoiſes furrowed the waters at a little diſtance from the ſhip, while, on another ſide, a tortoiſe preſſed heavily on the ſurface.

* What precedes, from the beginning of the laſt paragraph, is related, in the Hiſtory of the *Bird of Storms*, by Buffon (*Hiſt. Nat. des Oiſ.*) as an extract from the *Journal of a Navigator*. It was from my Journal that note was extracted.

We

We had another briſk gale from the weſt-ſouth-weſt on the 16th, but not ſo violent as the firſt; and on the 17th we deſcried *Uſtica*, one of the little iſlands dependant on Sicily. It is only four leagues round, and has the appearance of cultivation. It was the place of reſort for the pirates and corſairs who infeſted thoſe ſeas; about four years ago, however, the king of Naples determined to build a fort, to keep them off. We had likewiſe before us the lofty ſhore of Cape Saint-Vitto, in Sicily, and, at ten o'clock in the evening, came to an anchor off the mouth of the harbour of Palermo.

CHAP. IV.

Maritime honours—Engliſh travellers—Palermo and it's environs.

IT was an affair of no ſlight importance to ſettle the manner in which ſhips of war were to give and receive ſalutes in the ports of foreign nations. Every commander had particular inſtructions on the ſubject; and if it was recommended to them to ſupport the glory of their flag in battle, it was no leſs expreſsly preſcribed not to let it down in the form of the honours which they paid, or had a right to demand. This idle ceremonial frequently became the ſource of ſerious diſputes, and diſturbed the tranquillity of nations. Punctilious officers gravely employed themſelves in a minute detail of this weighty buſineſs. Some of this deſcription have been known at Smyrna, the moſt frequented port of the Levant for European veſſels, to claim and appropriate to themſelves, excluſively, the diſcharge of cannon, by which merchant ſhips are accuſtomed to expreſs their reſpect for men of war, of whatever kind, on entering a harbour, and to haſten the return of the ſalute, even before it was finiſhed, for fear that the ſhips of other powers ſhould anticipate it as their due. As if the glory of arms could conſiſt in ſuch frivolous emulation, the

the furniture only of narrow minds, but totally unworthy of the military character, to whoſe talents and intrepidity were confided the floating batteries deſtined to waft along the ocean terror to the enemies of the ſtate, and protection to commerce; as if a ſimple omiſſion in a point of civility, which ought to be carefully diſtinguiſhed from an inſult, did not rather degrade the perſon guilty of it, than him who had a right to expect it. Many will recollect the phlegm of a Dutch officer's reply, in the Eaſt-Indies, to Bougainville, who put the queſtion to him, What form of ſalute he was to receive, in caſe his ſhip ſhould render the proper honours to the Dutch fort? "When I pull off my hat to "any one," anſwered the Dutchman, "it is on my "part a mark of politeneſs which I think due to "him; but I do not wait to inform myſelf before-"hand whether he is, in return, to uncover his "head."

Be this as it may, we were obliged to comply with the cuſtom; and as ſoon as the *Atalanta* had caſt anchor in the port of Palermo, on officer was diſpatched with compliments to the Sicilian viceroy, and to ſettle with him the grand queſtion of *ſalutes*. It was agreed that the frigate ſhould ſalute by firing fifteen guns, and that the citadel ſhould return it by the like number. This arrangement being made we fired our ſalute; but two hours

elapſed before they were in a condition to repay it. We could, however, take no offence at this extraordinary delay, for we ſaw diſtinctly the cannonneers labouring, without intermiſſion, to raiſe from the earth ſome pieces of ordnance half-buried in it, to lift them up on blocks of wood to ſerve as carriages, and at length put them in a condition to be fired off. Such was then the ſtate of the Sicilian artillery. The corſairs of the Barbary coaſt were well acquainted with this, and knew how to avail themſelves of it, by coming to cut ſhips out of the very harbour.

The viceroy ſent an officer on board to congratulate us on our arrival, and to invite us to the *converſazione*; this is the name given to the aſſemblies or domeſtic parties held in the opulent houſes of Italy.

We ſtopped only three days at Palermo. Theſe I employed in taking a rapid view of what appeared curious in the city and its environs, already known from different relations, and from the beautiful drawings which have been taken of it. I ſhall deſcribe with ſimilar rapidity what a ſtay ſo ſhort permitted me to remark.

The harbour, one of the ſafeſt in the Mediterranean, defended by a fortreſs whoſe artillery, as I have

have juſt now ſaid, had nothing formidable, is ſemicircular. The city, the ſuburbs, and the walks which ſurround them, preſent an amphitheatre equally agreeable and variegated. A chain of lofty mountains, bare and uncultivated, riſe behind the city, and render its poſition more picturesque. It is ſhut in by four beautiful gates; two ſtreets, which terminate in them, form, croſſing each other nearly at the centre, an open place, of no great extent, which they call the *Ottangolo*, and from which you can ſee the four gates. Theſe ſtreets run in a ſtraight line; they are broad, well built, and paved with great ſtones. In the evening, a multitude of ſhops and coffee-houſes lighted up, the great number of carriages rolling along, illuminated by flambeaux, the crowds of people on foot preſſing by each other, through the longeſt and the moſt reſpectable of theſe ſtreets, reſemble the ſplendor and the hurlyburly of that of Saint-Honoré, at Paris. The Sicilians, who are not of the laborious claſs of mankind, never go abroad but in a coach: it would be deemed indecent for a man in affluent circumſtances to make uſe of his legs. The number of carriages is accordingly very great; a ſtranger may hire a very decent one at the rate of ſix or ſeven ſhillings a day. Every body there wears a ſword; the cobler, with his leathern apron and greaſy jacket; the hair-dreſſer, in his jerkin and his powder-bag on his arm; in a word, the artiſan of every

deſcription, going from his habitation in the appropriate garb of his profeſſion, has his ſide armed with a long ſword de Criſpin, his head buried in a large old perruque, and generally his noſe loaded with a pair of ſpectacles.

Thoſe who have read Brydone's tour through Sicily and Malta, know that he has diverted himſelf at the expenſe of a Frenchwoman who keeps the only inn for the accommodation of ſtrangers at Palermo. He employs half a chapter of his book in painting, or rather caricaturing, the prattle and vanity of that woman, and takes occaſion from it to extend his ſatire to French women in general, which aſſuredly is neither juſt nor conſiſtent with gallantry. But their graces and amability, to which a well merited homage is generally paid, can ſuffer no imputation from the ſarcaſtic humour of an Engliſhman. Brydone is not the only traveller of his nation who has indulged himſelf in ſpeaking ſlightly of ours; and, in the eyes of every impartial perſon, that ſpirit of jealouſy and pride muſt appear not a whit leſs ridiculous than the little traits of preſumption of Madame Montagne, that is the landlord's name. I ordered a dinner at his houſe, in order to have an opportunity of talking with him about Brydone, who had viſited Palermo a few years before. My hoſteſs knew that he had publiſhed many pleaſantries of which ſhe was the butt,

and

and that both ſhe and her huſband were treated unhandſomely in his book; but ſhe was ignorant of the particulars. I read the offenſive paſſages. On this ſhe proved to me that Brydone had not deviated far from the truth, in repreſenting her as a great talker: ſhe was not ſoon exhauſted in detailing to me a number of little anecdotes which had determined her to deſire the Engliſhman to look out for another lodging, and, on this ſubject, pronounced a chapter at leaſt as long as that of the traveller.

The churches of Palermo, like almoſt all thoſe of Italy, are decorated moſt magnificently. Some of them, that of the Jeſuits, for inſtance, are ſo overloaded with ornaments and riches as to offend againſt good taſte. But, beſides the beautiful pictures which adorn the inſide of moſt of thoſe edifices, the ſuperb altar of the church of Sainte-Catharine is particularly admired; the church is conſtructed of the moſt beautiful marble, and which, by a ſingular accident, forms, round the altar, a broad border in feſtoons. In the cathedral, the attention is arreſted on the twenty-four columns of oriental granite which ſupport it, the tombs of porphyry, and an immenſe tabernacle of lapis-lazuli. A prieſt, after having drawn aſide, and with an air of great myſtery, four or five curtains one after another, ſhewed me a great wooden crucifix, which he

he ſeriouſly aſſured me had been begun by S. Nicodemus, who, having fallen aſleep in the midſt of his labour, was very much ſurprized, on awaking, to find the work finiſhed. It was hardly worth while, after all, to call in the aſſiſtance of a miracle to complete ſuch a miſerable production.

If the churches at Palermo are exquiſitely beautiful, the temple there reared to nature and the ſciences, is in a woful ſtate of decay; a proof that there is in that city more devotion than curioſity, more piety than taſte for inſtruction. The muſeum is a confuſed aſſemblage of very unintereſting objects. The collection of animals is the moſt wretched that can be imagined, and conſiſts only of ſome monſters preſerved in ſpirit of wine, and of ſome ſkins eaten through by the mites, and falling into tatters. The abbé, who ſhewed this cabinet, told me, that the Jeſuits had carried off or ſold the moſt valuable articles which it contained, at the time of their expulſion from the dominions of the king of Naples. There ſtill remain, however, ſome curious petrifications and beautiful morſels of antiquity, of which, as my guide informed me, the ingenious Hamilton, ambaſſador from England at the court of Naples, had given drawings and a deſcription. They likewiſe ſhew there anatomical injections of a man and of a woman, perfectly well executed by a Sicilian phyſician, who

who was then alive. Fazello, who has written a hiſtory of Sicily,* and other authors, have made mention of the giants who are ſuppoſed to have inhabited this iſland, and of their ſkeletons diſcovered in the trenches which they dig in certain places. There is nothing in the muſeum at Palermo which has any relation to men of extraordinary ſtature; I wiſhed to enter into converſation with my conductor on this ſubject; but it was impoſſible for us to underſtand each other, from the extreme difference of our manner of pronouncing the Latin language, which I was under the neceſſity of employing, not being ſufficiently maſter of the Italian. Among the whole number of intelligent perſons whom I have had an opportunity of conſulting, I never found one who had the ſlighteſt idea of ever having ſeen the remains of a giant, or had heard it affirmed that ſuch a thing exiſted in all Sicily.

The fields of the environs are very pleaſant. The *Bagaria*, in particular, a canton three leagues from the city, is remarkable for the beauty of its plains, the variety of its culture, the fertility of its ſoil, and the numerous rural retreats with which it is decorated. The road which leads to it is bordered with aloës, and the Indian fig. There it is we ſee a ſhameful monument raiſed by a prince Palogoni

* Thomæ Fazelli Decades, de rebus Siculis. Catania, 1749.

to

to bad taſte, it is too ſhocking to paſs under the ſimple denomination of *folly*. Let the reader imagine to himſelf the outſide and the avenues of a nobleman's country reſidence loaded with a prodigious number of ſtatues in ſtone, rudely hewn, huddled together without order, and repreſenting monſters of a compoſition ſo diſguſting that they ceaſe to be ridiculous. The interior is in the ſame ſtyle: the walls of the apartments are plated with glaſs painted into the appearance of falſe marble; pieces of glaſs which reflect the images in a thouſand different directions form the cielings. There you find great crucifixes, pyramids compoſed of cups, of ſaucers, of coffee-pots, and of another ſpecies of vaſe which certainly ought not to have a place in architecture.* All theſe pieces are arranged in ſuch a manner, that they form an aſſemblage abominable in the extreme. In the chapel, for example, there is a group of beautiful angels, abſolutely naked, and of the moſt lively carnation; in the midſt of them is a great figure in wood, of a dead man half devoured by worms. It is, unfortunately, ſo well executed as to appear natural, on the firſt glance. I was told that ſeveral women, who had indulged their curioſity in viewing this repoſitory of abſurdity the moſt groteſque, fainted away ſome of them, and ſome with child ſuſtained very ſerious injury, by fixing their eyes on that truly horrible

* Chamber-pots.

figure,

figure, after having firſt contemplated with complacency the beautiful forms and vivid colouring of the angels. The proprietor of this manſion has been put under an interdict, becauſe he ruined himſelf by the execution of theſe inconceivably wild ideas: for his city-palace is ſaid to be fitted up in the ſame taſte with his country reſidence.

The château of prince de *Valguarnera* is cloſe by that of prince Palagoni, but has no reſemblance to it. The fabric, as well as the furniture, is in a good taſte; its ſituation and proſpects are delightful; an elegant theatre, on which dramas are repreſented for the amuſement of domeſtic circles, ſuperb gardens, fine ſheets of water, and, above all, the princely character of the maſter, concur in rendering this a moſt delicious retreat.

I likewiſe made a haſty trip to *Montreale*, a little city built on the ſummit of a very ſteep hill. A magnificent road, recently conſtructed, leads to it. On its ſoftened declivity, from diſtance to diſtance, are beautiful fountains, whoſe living and limpid waters refreſh the thirſty traveller, while walls, breaſt high on both ſides, the whole length of the way, ſecure him from all danger, and the air which he breathes is ſweetly perfumed with the bloſſoms of a foreſt of orange and citron trees which grow in the valley. The view expands as you aſcend on this

this charming road, and on reaching the ſummit it becomes unbounded. Numerous inſcriptions catch the eye every ſtep you take: they contain moſt of them only a play of words, what the Italians call *concettis*. This one meets you on entering the road; *Ut faciliùs.—Et quò faciliùs, eò citiùs.* A vaſt church, reared by William-the-Good, conſtitutes the principal merit of *Montreale*; it is completely incruſted with moſaic work, and the grand altar is of maſſy ſilver of exquiſite workmanſhip.

Among the remarkable objects in the vicinity of Palermo pointed out to ſtrangers, they fail not to ſingularize a convent of capuchins at a ſmall diſtance from town, the beautiful gardens of which ſerve as a public walk. You are ſhewn, under the fabric, a vault divided into four great galleries, into which the light is admitted by windows cut out at the top of each extremity. In this vault are preſerved, not in fleſh, but in ſkin and bone, all the capuchins who have died in the convent ſince it's foundation, as well as the bodies of ſeveral perſons from the city. There are here private tombs belonging to opulent families who, even after annihilation,* diſdain to be confounded with the vulgar part of mankind. It is ſaid, that in order to ſecure the preſervation of thoſe bodies, they are prepared

* Our author is a thorough convert to the modern French-republican creed.—H. H.

by

by being gradually dried before a ſlow fire, ſo as to conſume the fleſh without greatly injuring the ſkin. When perfectly dry, they are inveſted with the capuchin habit, and placed upright on tablets diſpoſed, ſtep above ſtep, along the ſides of the vault, the head, the arms, and the feet are left naked. A preſervation like this is horrid. The ſkin diſcoloured, dry, and as if it had been tanned, nay torn in ſome places, is glewed cloſe to the bone. It is eaſy to imagine, from the different grimaces of this numerous aſſemblage of fleſhleſs figures, rendered ſtill more frightful by a long beard on the chin, what a hideous ſpectacle this muſt exhibit; and whoever has ſeen a capuchin alive, may form an idea of this ſingular repoſitory of dead friars.

But let us quit this lugubrious manſion, in which man makes vain efforts to eſcape the deſtruction that awaits him, and direct our looks to the ſmiling and animated picture preſented in the various productions of the highly privileged ſoil of Sicily. Warmed by the heat of a genial ſky, and by ſubterranean fires, the earth yields to almoſt every ſpecies of culture.* Whether ſhe clothes herſelf in the moſt beautiful green, whether ſhe teems with

* In the garden of the Archbiſhop of Palermo, there were in the open ground ſeveral banana plants (*Muſa paradiſiaca*, Lin.) which bare flowers and fruits.

the

the golden harveſts, the plenteouſneſs of which, in ancient times, procured for the iſland the name of the *granary of Rome*; whether the trees of every ſort load themſelves with flowers and fruits of the ſweeteſt perfume, ſhe at all ſeaſons diſplays the rich garb of fecundity. What would ſhe be, were ſhe better ſeconded by the men whom her fertility ſhould render leſs negligent, were they more active and earneſt to multiply the treaſures which bountiful nature laviſhes on them with ſo much grace and munificence.

The women whom I have ſeen in that part of Sicily which I viſited, are in general beautiful; they have the character of being very ſuſceptible of tender impreſſions, happy diſpoſition, for which they are indebted to the mild influence of the atmoſphere. Severity of climate blunts ſenſibility, and but too often hardens the heart.

Rich paſtures feed numerous herds of beautiful oxen, of the ſame ſpecies with thoſe of France. "They conſtantly differ, nevertheleſs, in the form "of their horns, which are very remarkable for their "length, and the regularity of their figure; theſe "horns have only a gentle curve, and their uſual "length, meaſured in a ſtraight line, is three feet, "and ſometimes three feet and a half: they are all

"very

"very regularly deſigned, and of a form abſolutely "ſimilar."* Game of every kind is there in abundance, and that bird whoſe fleſh, of an excellent flavour, claims a preference even to the bird of Phaſis, the francolin (heath-cock), is not ſcarce in this iſland.†

The ſea appears to contend with the land in generoſity, in order to multiply the reſources already ſo abundant which the earth provides for the ſupport and delight of human life. Fiſh is there found in great profuſion: they fiſh for tunnies with that ſpecies of ſweep-net which is likewiſe uſed along the coaſt of what was called Provence. They were caught in ſuch quantities during my reſidence at Palermo, that the fiſhermen who hawked them through the ſtreets, preceded by a drum, ſold them at the rate of five farthings a pound; and ſome time before, while we anchored at the Vignettes, the ſame fiſh coſt at Toulon three pence the pound.

* I have diſtinguiſhed this obſervation, reſpecting the Sicilian oxen, by marks of quotation, becauſe Buffon, who had it from me, has introduced it into the ſupplement to his hiſtory of quadrupeds, *ſecond art. des Bœufs*.

† The francolin is not peculiar to Sicily, as has been aſſerted in an *abridged Deſcription of Sicily*, printed as a ſequel to Brydone's Tour: "There are various ſpecies of fowls which are "to be found no where but in Sicily, ſuch as the framolin "(meaning francolin undoubtedly):" but it is well known that this bird likewiſe inhabits other warm countries.

Another treaſure from the ſea, near the coaſts of Sicily, is the coral, which reddens the bottom of it, and the fiſhery of which furniſhes employment for a great number of boats. Finally, that nothing may appear deſtitute of life and motion, the *goëlands* cleave the air with a rapid flight in all directions, over the maſts of the ſhips moored in the harbour, and oppoſe the beautiful white of their plumage to the brilliant azure of an atmoſphere almoſt always perfectly pure.

CHAP.

CHAP. V.

Paſſage from Palermo to Malta—Soundings between Sicily and the Iſland of Malta, and between this laſt and Africa—Coaſts of Sicily—Pantalaria—Iſle of Malta; it's nature, it's cities, it's productions.

WE ſailed from the beautiful port of Palermo May the 22d, a little after midnight. The frigate had now all her guns mounted; thoſe which had been ſacrificed to the accommodation of the paſſengers, and the abſence of which deranged the ſymmetry of the ſhip's appearance, were replaced. Our courtiers had taken leave of us. Terrified at the rough weather which we encountered at ſea, and particularly at the ſtorm which attacked us off the mouths of Boniſacio, they did not chooſe to expoſe themſelves any more to the fury of an element ſo inconſtant, and had formed the reſolution, after traverſing Sicily, to croſs over to Naples, and return to France by land. They had been aſſured at Verſailles, and I have heard the ſame opinion expreſſed at Paris, that a ſhip of war defied all concuſſion in the midſt of the waves, and that they would be as tranquil at ſea as in their own houſes. What was their aſtoniſhment to perceive that a fabric ſo vaſt and ſo ponderous, was merely

a crazy play-thing to the winds and the foaming billows! We loſt an amiable ſociety, and I felt a very ſenſible regret in reflecting that our ſeparation made me loſe the opportunity of landing at Syracuſe, and of viewing Etna, which Nature ſeems to have placed in Sicily to exhibit there, at once, an example of her power in her beneficence as in her wrath.

At ſome diſtance from port we lay becalmed till next day at noon. We had around the veſſel a multitude of ſmall boats employed in the coral-fiſhery: we ſaw a great ſea-tortoiſe, and ſeveral of the fiſhes which the Mediterranean ſeamen call *moines* * (monks), and which are a ſpecies of *ſea-dog*. Four ſoldiers of the garriſon of Palermo made their eſcape on board, in a boat which they had carried off; we received them, and ſent back the boat by a fiſherman. Two of thoſe ſoldiers were French deſerters. About two o'clock in the afternoon, a Sicilian officer came off to reclaim them in the name of the viceroy. They were under the protection of the French flag; we refuſed to give them up, and the officer returned on ſhore very much out of humour at the bad ſucceſs of his miſſion. We had, on our part, loſt at Palermo

* They are likewiſe denominated *angel-fiſhes*, or ſimply *angel*. *Squalus Squatina*, Lin. Syſt. Nat. *Squalus pinna ani caſens, ore in apice capitis.* Artedi, Gen. piſc. p. 507.

two

two of our ſhip's company, who had deſerted there, and whom it was impoſſible to recover.

Buffon had with learned ſagacity demonſtrated that the Mediterranean ſea, originally a lake of no great extent, muſt have received, at diſtant times, a ſudden and prodigious increaſe at the era when the Black-Sea opened to itſelf a paſſage through the Boſphorus, and at that, when the ſinking of the land which, at the ſite of the ſtraits of Gibraltar, united Africa to Europe, had permitted the ocean to force its waters that way:* his idea was, that moſt of the Mediterranean iſlands conſtituted part of the continents, prior to the grand convulſions which changed the face of one part of the globe. In order to aſcertain with more preciſion his opinion reſpecting theſe epochas of nature, he had requeſted me to ſatisfy myſelf as to the depth of the ſea between Sicily and Malta. It was impoſſible to have a more favourable opportunity to fulfil his purpoſe. We had on board a coaſting pilot, an old man of great experience, and every way reſpectable, who, during his numerous voyages, had ſounded that depth in many places. I availed myſelf of the calm, to converſe with him at leiſure on the ſubject; and the reſult of the intereſting details with which he furniſhed me, was perfectly conformable to the ideas of Buffon. In

* Theory of the Earth, and Epochas of Nature.

fact, between the iſland of Sicily and that of Malta, the depth of water is generally from twenty-five to thirty fathoms; and in the very middle of the channel, where the depth is greateſt, we do not find it above a hundred. On the other hand, between the iſle of Malta and cape Bon, in Africa, there is ſtill leſs water, for the ſoundings do not give above twenty-five or thirty fathoms, through the whole breadth of the channel which ſeparates land from land.

A breeze from the eaſt waſted us upon Saint-Vitto, a lofty promontory cut perpendicularly. The coaſt, all the way from Palermo to this cape, is ſteep and interſected by valleys, whoſe ſoil, loaded with all the richneſs of cultivation, forms an agreeable contraſt with the aridity of the mountains which encloſe them. There is a conſiderable depth of water along this ſhore, and veſſels run no riſk in coming very nigh the land. We ſoon paſſed between *Maritimo* and *Favoyanno*, two ſmall iſlands belonging to the king of Naples, and uſed as a place of confinement for his ſtate priſoners. In ſteering our courſe for Malta we could perceive a long extent of the low-lying coaſts of Sicily, between cape *Marſalla* and cape *Paſſaro*, on the extremity of which a fort has been conſtructed. In the horizon we deſcried a chain of lofty mountains parallel to the coaſt. The weather was fine, the ſky clear, the

the veſſel was gliding gently along a ſurface which a light gale ſcarcely ruffled, and we could not tire of feaſting our eyes with the view of vaſt plains embelliſhed with all the charms of nature, and by the diverſity of the labours of agriculture.

On the morning of the 25th we found ourſelves cloſe on *Pantalaria*, an iſland of much greater length than breadth, elevated in the middle, and terminating in a low point at each of its extremities. It is inhabited, and abundantly fertile. An officer of the ſhip who, on a former voyage, had been aſhore there, informed me that there was but one ſingle ſpring in the whole iſland, but that on the ſummit of the higheſt of it's mountains, that is, nearly in the centre of the iſland, there was a lake of conſiderable extent. This lake is undoubtedly the crater of an extinguiſhed volcano, for the ſame officer had found on the ſpot all the indications of it, ſuch as the lavas, pumice-ſtones, &c. &c. The paſs of *Pantalaria* is formidable to mariners, eſpecially in winter, for experience has taught them that the ſeas which ſurround it are ſeldom navigated without meeting a violent gale of wind.

In the evening we ſaw ſome ſwallows: we were four leagues diſtant from *Pantalaria*, with the wind at eaſt. On the 26th, at three o'clock afternoon, we entered the port of Malta, one of the largeſt

and moſt beautiful in the univerſe. The mouth of it is very narrow, and defended on each ſide by a formidable caſtle; veſſels are obliged to carry before hand all the ſail they can poſſibly ſet, in order to acquire the impulſe or the velocity requiſite to carry them through this paſſage, in the midſt of which they find themſelves ſuddenly becalmed, from the height of the forts, which exceeds that of the maſt-head. It was the cuſtom of French men of war to ſalute the place with thirteen guns, which was returned by eleven; when the ſhips of the knighthood entered the ports of France, they obſerved the ſame etiquette. If the galley of the general of the order was in port, the ceremonial required a ſecond ſalute of fifteen guns to her, and at the moment when the general came to return the viſit which the French commander was expected to pay firſt, he was received with a diſcharge of thirteen guns. Every knight of the order, who thought proper to amuſe himſelf by coming on board, was welcomed by the noiſe of five cannon; thus it frequently happened that a French ſhip of war, if ſhe was detained any length of time in the harbour of Malta, was obliged to expend more gunpowder than during all the reſt of her cruize.

The fortifications which defend the port and city are the beſt in the world; they are kept up with

with extreme attention. It is well known that the united forces of the Ottoman empire failed in their attack of this impregnable rampart. It was a conqueſt, or rather a new prodigy, reſerved for French valour.

The ridge of the houſes, as in Italy and all over the eaſt, is a flat terrace. The city Valette, or New-town, is well built; the ſtones employed in the conſtruction of their edifices, and in the pavement of the principal ſtreets, are of a ſoft conſiſtency when they come from the quarry: they harden by expoſure to the air; but are, at the ſame time, ſo extremely white as to injure the eyes, eſpecially when they reflect the rays of a burning ſun. The palace of the grand-maſter was of vaſt magnitude, and of a beautiful ſimplicity both within and without.

The order of Malta had a public library, the augmentation of which was abundantly rapid; the private libraries of the commanders were there depoſited after their death; the duplicate copies were ſold, and the produce ſerved to purchaſe the books which they had not. Several objects of natural hiſtory were exhibited in this library, among which was diſtinguiſhed a petrified bone of great ſize; it paſſed, at Malta, for a piece of petrified wood, but the bony texture was eaſily diſcernible, and I convinced

vinced ſome well-informed perſons of its real nature. It is part of the *femur* (thigh-bone) of a large quadruped; I ſent a drawing of it to Buffon.

Another cabinet of curioſities, but much richer, was in the poſſeſſion of M. Barbaroux. Without being of great compaſs, it contained ſome very valuable articles; and the proprietor, who united politeneſs to ſcience, ſhewed it to ſtrangers with a very amiable complaiſance. This little muſeum contained ſeveral beautiful ſhells and curious petrifications; a great number of medals were arranged in a cabinet of a very ingenious form. Amidſt the productions of art, you viewed there with pleaſure, a very large figured pearl, a beautiful head painted in enamel in *clar-obſcuro*, and a great medallion of cryſtal, engraved by Michael Angelo. I muſt not terminate this enumeration of rarities, without making mention of one of thoſe phenomena, commonly denominated the ſportings of Nature, as if Nature could blunder or condeſcend to trifle, and which are rather proofs of her power and of the prodigious variety of the means which ſhe is pleaſed to employ. It was the portrait which I ſaw in the collection of the chevalier Deſpennes, chargé des affaires from France, of a little girl, on whoſe forehead was a third eye, much larger than the other two, and which was itſelf equivalent to two, as it had a double iris and central ſpot;

the

the reſt of the face was of the ordinary conformation. At the bottom of the drawing an inſcription in Italian informs you that this child was born at the village of Monte Alegra, in Mercia, January 31, 1775; but the inſcription did not bear, and no one could inform me, whether the being endowed with ſuch an exceſs in the organ of viſion, lived long.

We had juſt left a city rendered noiſy by the multitude of carriages. Here it is no diſgrace to walk, and horſes and chariots do not rattle about through the ſtreets, to the annoyance of citizens on foot. The grand-maſter alone uſed a carriage with ſix horſes, and he ſcarcely ever employed it, except in riding to his country-ſeat. The officers of the Order, and other inhabitants, had, for the ſame purpoſe, chaiſes drawn by a ſingle mule, which a man led by a leathern thong; a ſage precaution, and worthy of being imitated, wherever the ſafety of man is attended to in preference to the giddineſs of luxury, the buſtle of which, in populous cities, is a continual ſubject of apprehenſion, and ſometimes an inſtrument of death to the modeſt and uſeful citizen. It were to be wiſhed that an equal ſecurity were there provided againſt the dangers incurred in offering ſacrifices to Venus, from the multitude of her prieſteſſes who flock thither from all parts. They are the refuſe of all nations; and

their

their concourſe, which formed an epigram with one of the vows of the knights, was ſingularly pernicious to the crews of veſſels frequenting thoſe ſeductive and perfidious reſorts.

Brydone has amuſed himſelf with telling tales, reſpecting the knights of Malta, ſomewhat ſimilar to thoſe of which poor Madame Montagne, at Palermo, is the ſubject. On my arrival I found the public mind violently exaſperated againſt him, and there was but too much ground for it. The truth is, he deſcribes the manner of life of the chevaliers, without having been in intimacy with a ſingle one, during the whole time of his reſidence in the iſland; his picture, and this is not the only occaſion on which the ſame reproach may be addreſſed to him, is far from being a likeneſs; and when he ſpeaks of the mode of duelling between the knights, of the croſſes painted on the wall oppoſite to the ſpot where one of them has been killed, of the puniſhments incurred by ſuch as refuſe a challenge,* they are ſo many errors eſcaped from his pen, deceived, undoubtedly, by lying reports, and too inconſiderately adopted. For my own part, I found the utmoſt politeneſs of behaviour, and the kindeſt attentions in the ſociety of the members of the order with whom I had any connection, and I recollect with gratitude the warm reception, and the

* Tour through Sicily and Malta, vol. i. p. 363, &c.

cordial

cordial civilities which I met with from ſeveral of them, and particularly from citizen Dolomieux, whom the ſciences have ranked in the number of their moſt reſpected and moſt illuſtrious partiſans.

At the diſtance of a league from the new city ſtands the old one, or *Citta Vecchia*; it was the reſidence of the biſhop of the iſland. The cathedral is a very beautiful edifice. There are to be ſeen marbles the moſt invaluable, ſuch as thoſe known by the name of the *green and yellow antique*. Though of a vaſt ſize, it is lined internally, the whole length of the building, with crimſon damaſk, bordered with a broad lace of fine gold. Theſe religious monuments, more ſimple at Malta than at Genoa or Palermo, are there likewiſe, in my opinion, more beautiful, and in a better taſte. In truth, the extraordinary quantity of ornaments with which the churches of Genoa are overloaded, preſent to the dazzled eye tinſel merely, which, joined to their over-cramped and niggardly conſtruction, if I may be allowed the expreſſion, deſtroy that idea of magnificence and majeſty which one expects to meet in the temples of the Deity. From the turrets of the cathedral, the eye eaſily diſcovers Mount Etna and its thick ſmoke, though at the diſtance of near ſixty-ſeven leagues.

Near

Near this church is a grotto of no great extent, in the midſt of which ſtands a very good ſtatue of St. Paul. This apoſtle, every one knows, is held in high veneration among the Malteſe, becauſe, they pretend, he landed on their iſland, and delivered it for ever from the ſerpents, with which it was before infeſted. The grotto has been ſcooped out of a ſpecies of white earth, ſoft and calcareous, commonly denominated *bole of Malta (bolus Melitenſis)*; but the name is improper, for the bole is a clayey earth, more or leſs pure, conſequently capable of being vitrified, and not ſubject to the attack of acids; whereas the *Malteſe earth*, on the contrary, is of a calcareous nature, and produces effervescence with theſe ſame acids. Buffon has followed, on this article, the opinion of moſt of the mineralogiſts who preceded him, and who, copying from each other, had conſidered the *Malteſe earth* as a bole, or argillous earth, and, in his Hiſtory of Minerals, he has made a bole of it; but, what is not eaſily to be conceived, is his miſtaking the *Malteſe earth* for a red bole, though it be white as chalk, with which it has, moreover, many other points of affinity.* It is known at Malta by no other name but that

* "The red bole derives its colour from iron in ruſt.....It is "with this bole that they prepare the *terra ſigillata*.....They "likewiſe give it the names of *Lemnos earth, holy earth, St. Paul's "earth, earth of Malta, earth of Conſtantinople.*" Buffon, Hiſt. Nat. des Mineraux, art. des Bols.

of

of *Saint Paul's earth.* They make tablets of it, on which they impreſs the image of the apoſtle, holding a ſerpent in his hand; theſe are exported to different countries of Europe, and more particularly to Spain and Italy. It is from this ſort of preparation, that it has received in commerce, as well as the other earths and boles to which they communicate various impreſſions, the name of *terra ſigillata* (ſealed or ſtamped earth.) It paſſes, at Malta, as a wonderful remedy in many diſeaſes, and as an infallible ſpecific againſt fevers; but all it's properties are reducible to one, that of furniſhing a gentle ſudorific.

The common people are not ſatisfied with aſcribing qualities almoſt ſupernatural to the earth of Saint Paul's grotto; they maintain beſides that it's maſs underwent no diminution, whatever the quantity extracted from it. It is in the eyes of the Malteſe a conſtant miracle operated by Saint Paul; accordingly the earth which bears his name is conſidered as a ſacred ſubſtance in that iſland. Aſſuredly it does not appear to undergo any ſenſible diminution. This eaſy reproduction may be attributed to the humidity of the grotto, and to the earth's want of conſiſtency. In order to undeceive thoſe who affirm that it loſes nothing of its bulk, it would be ſufficient to point out to them the clearly apparent cavities formed by the edge of the

inſtruments

inſtruments employed in detaching it from the maſs. But it is no eaſy matter to diſabuſe perſons accuſtomed to explain natural facts by miracles.

A lichen entirely white grows over the interior ſurface of the vault of Saint Paul's grotto.

At ſome diſtance from the old city are found vaſt excavations, which it is eaſy to dig and to extend, in a ſoil which preſents very little reſiſtance. They are divided into numerous ramifications, multiplied to ſuch a degree that they formed a labyrinth, in which a man might loſe himſelf and periſh, had not the precaution been employed of walling up the entrance of ſome of thoſe ſubterranean galleries; they were formerly uſed as a place of ſepulture, *catacombs*, the name ſtill given them. Tombs of ſtone are placed in them on each ſide, one above another; they are of various ſizes; a dome likewiſe of ſtone covers ſome of them, and there is great reaſon to think that they were all enclоſed in the ſame manner. The part of thoſe ſtone-coffins, on which the head of the dead perſon reſted, is raiſed about two inches above the bottom, and there was cut into it the form of the head and neck, ſo that they were enchaſed in this ſpecies of dead pillow. Some coffins, broader than others, preſented an excavation for two heads;

affection

affection had deſtined them, no doubt, for lovers, or for huſband and wife.

Theſe catacombs appear likewiſe to have ſerved as a place of retreat, in times not very remote, to the inhabitants of Malta, when their iſland became a prey to the wars which have frequently ſcourged it. Two ancient mills are here alſo pointed out to you, and once more that image, the ſafeguard of a credulous people, the ſtatue of St. Paul.

The iſland of Malta, ſituated nearly in the middle of the Mediterranean ſea, between Sicily and Africa, is but ſeven leagues at it's greateſt length, and four at it's extreme breadth. Properly ſpeaking it is nothing but a rock, almoſt entirely bare. But it is not of that kind of rock which the keen tooth of time can hardly penetrate, and which ſuggeſts the idea of complete aridity. It is a calcareous ſtone, extremely white, of a looſe texture, of a conſiſtence by no means ſolid, and which repels not all cultivation, Though moſt of the numerous iſlands of the ſame ſea have been the focus or the reſult of the terrible exploſions of nature, that of Malta has not experienced their violence, and is to be traced up to quite a different origin. No veſtige of a volcano is there perceptible; and if you meet with lavas on it, they are thoſe of Mount Veſuvius, imported thither to

ſerve as grinding-ſtones for their mills, and to make a pavement for their cities. You do not ſo much as find in it vitriable ſubſtances; every thing there is calcareous, if you except the talc, the gypſe, and the clay; and beſides, this laſt ſubſtance is found in very ſmall quantities, and always mixed with calcareous matter; it is in greater abundance, and more pure in the iſle of Gozzi, which is cloſe by that of Malta, and dependent upon it.

There are, moreover, no mountains in the iſland of Malta, nor in that of Gozzi; they are nothing but a plain, interrupted by ſome hills of very little elevation.

It is impoſſible to tire in admiring the induſtry of the Malteſe farmers, who have ſucceeded in diffuſing fertility over a rock, for the greateſt part naked, or ſcarcely covered by a few inches of earth. In order to reduce a ſoil, apparently ſo ungrateful, to a ſtate favourable to vegetation, theſe laborious men ſcoop out the rock, and break it down. The parts neareſt the ſurface, and which the contact of the air had hardened, ſerve to conſtruct, round the field, a dry wall, which, at the ſame time, clears it of the ſtony ſubſtances which are too ſolid to be decompounded, and prevents the rain water from waſhing away the vegetable earth. A part of the rock is reduced, by dint of labour, into ſmall particles,

ticles, and with theſe they mix a thin ſtratum of mould, which they go in queſt of ſometimes as far as to Sicily. This mixture is exceedingly prolific. They cultivate with ſucceſs the alimentary plants, the millet, the annual cotton.* The fig and other fruit trees thrive extremely well; here grow to perfection thoſe beautiful oranges, with a red pulp, and of a delicious flavour, ſo highly eſteemed in Europe.

But, it muſt be acknowledged, notwithſtanding the ingenuity and induſtry of the Malteſe, their fields preſent little that pleaſes; nay, their aſpect is abſolutely diſagreeable. The walls which encloſe their endleſsly ſubdivided poſſeſſions, the whiteneſs of the ſtones, a ſoil yellow and parched, almoſt without trees and without verdure, form a very harſh picture which fatigues the eye. Culture never aſſumes a ſmiling aſpect, unleſs when ſeconded by nature.

We muſt conſider as one of the moſt powerful efforts of Malteſe induſtry, the formation of a great garden, in which they were employed at St. Antonio, the grand-maſter's country reſidence, about half a league from the city. It was really a prodigy in a country where it is ſo difficult to clothe the ground; any where elſe it would have been a

* *Gaſſypium herbaceum.* Lin.

mere ordinary garden, though it was decorated with a great many flowers, among others with magnificent double poppies,* and beautiful ſcabiuſes.† The alleys, covered with fragments of white ſtones, were uneaſy to the feet, and tireſome to the ſight. The grand-maſter, Rohan, gave us an entertainment at this country-palace. In the city, no one could ſit down to eat with that petty ſovereign, and at St. Antonio, it was not the right of every one to have a place at his table. Meſſrs. Durfort and Tott, as having the rank of colonels, were alone admitted to it, and even they were ſeparated from the grand-maſter by the whole length of a great table. The other officers ſat at a different board, the honours of which were done by the gentlemen of the palace, and, of a truth, no one of us regretted the oppreſſive and cold etiquette of the firſt table. After dinner, Rohan laid aſide all ceremony; he mingled with his company, and choſe to be of all our parties.

The territory of Malta is likewiſe far from equal to the ſupport of it's inhabitants. Moſt part of the corns, of the cattle, in a word, every article of conſumption, the very ſoil, as we have juſt now ſeen, are imported from Sicily, which is literally the granary and the market of the Malteſe. The embarkations deſtined to the purchaſe of provi-

* *Papaver rhœas.* Lin. † *Scabioſa atro-purpurea.* Lin.

ſions,

ſions, and which they call *ſpetonaria*, are perhaps the moſt expeditious that exiſt, and are manned with the moſt hardy ſeamen in the world.

The ſtones got from the quarries of Malta, are in requeſt for the conſtruction of houſes; their ſoftneſs, before they are expoſed to the air, renders them of eaſy adaptation to a variety of purpoſes; they are exported ready cut into our ſouthern departments, to Italy, and even to the Levant.

There was diſcovered, a few years ago, a ſparry and calcareous ſubſtance, to which they gave the name of *Malteſe-ſtone*. Many pieces of excellent workmanſhip were manufactured out of it; and the grand-maſter, Pinto, was ſo jealous of this excluſive poſſeſſion, that he prohibited the exportation of it, and even it's manufacture by any one, except his own people. His ſucceſſor, Rohan Poldux, was not tainted with a jealouſy ſo contemptible, and I had it in my power to procure ſpecimens of it, both rough and poliſhed, which I have transferred to the national cabinet. But the true nature of that ſubſtance appeared to be ſtill a ſecret; it generally paſſed for a marble, though it's grain, it's conſiſtence, and eſpecially it's formation, differed exceedingly from the grain, the hardneſs, and the formation of marble. One of my fellow travellers who, with a good deal of ſprightlineſs and volubi-

lity, but with a very ſcanty ſtock of knowledge, was not afraid ſometimes to hazard, with a tone of ſelf-ſufficiency, opinions the moſt erroneous, M. Tott, had laid it down as certain, that the pretended marble of Malta was talc. This opinion was favourably received, and the grand-maſter appeared to be perſuaded that it was founded in truth. In ſupport of it, M. Tott produced a fragment of that ſtone, a part of which was, according to him, evidently talc, and he concluded that no argument was capable of deſtroying a fact, which was, in reality, nothing more than a ſuppoſition more than gratuitous. In fact, on the examination of this fragment, which was to conſtitute the proof an abſurd aſſertion, it appeared that the faſcicles of needles of which it was compoſed, had been cut diagonally in certain places, and that theſe ſections preſented ſhining and tranſparent plates, which exhibited a falſe appearance of talc, of which our half-philoſopher had been the dupe. I was forced, ſo to ſpeak, to explain myſelf on this ſubject before a numerous company. I declared, without reſerve, that I could not be of M. Tott's ſentiment; and I employed a reaſoning ſufficiently ſimple to be eaſily comprehended by every body: it was, that talc reſiſts every attack of acids, whereas they produce the moſt powerful effect on matter purely calcareous, which are put to this teſt. M. Tott's opinion of courſe fell to the ground, and

that

that aſſuming gentleman never forgave me the offence.

It was not difficult, moreover, to fix the place which the pretended marble of Malta ought to occupy among ſtony ſubſtances. For on examining the figure and the diſpoſition of the *faſciculi* of needles of which it is formed, on obſerving the concentric circles diſcovered on ſawing it tranſverſely; on paying attention to it's want of conſiſtence, which prevents the poſſibility of manufacturing it into tables of any conſiderable ſize, without their cleaving aſunder; above all, on ſtudying it's poſition in the rocks, you will preſently diſcover thoſe calcareous ſtalactites, thoſe concrete maſſes, produced by the infiltration of water through calcareous ſubſtances; in a word, the alabaſter of naturaliſts, which muſt not be confounded with that much harder alabaſter that takes a poliſh ſo beautiful, and whoſe dazzling whiteneſs is ſo much cried up.

It is found generally in irregular blocks, and whoſe ſurface is cruſted over with little buttons of the ſame nature. That of Gozzi is the only one which is ſometimes found in ſtrata, but theſe are irregular, and of no great extent. The calcareous rock which covers theſe blocks and theſe ſtrata, is, for the moſt part, whiter and of a cloſer grain than that which compoſes the reſt of the iſlands of Malta and

Gozzi, this is occaſioned by the diſtillation of the waters, which, in paſſing through that rock, carry along with them the lighter particles of it. The colours of the alabaſter of Malta vary, according to the diſtricts where it is found; but they are always a mixture of yellow, gray, and blackiſh. It admits of a fine poliſh. I have ſeen very beautiful tables and large corner-buffets of it in the palace of the grand-maſter.

The ſpecies of lichen proper for furniſhing the die, known by the name of *orſilla herbæ*, generally grows on rocks bathed by the ſea.* The grand-maſter propoſed to take up with ſpirit this new branch of commerce in his iſland, for which it is indebted to the exertions and the reſearches of citizen Dolomieux.

The ſea on the coaſts of Malta furniſh in abundance various ſpecies of fiſhes. The natives ſet a high value on a ſort which they call *accola*, and the French *thon blanc* (the white tunny). I never had it in my power to aſcertain it's genus with preciſion, having ſeen it only when dreſſed for the table; it does not attain the ſize of the common tunny, but it's fleſh is whiter, and likewiſe more delicate. It is very probably that which Cette firſt deſcribed,

* *Fucus verrucoſus tinctorius.* Tournef. Inſt. rei herb.—*Lichen Roxella.* Lin.

under

under the name of *alalunga*, in his History of the Fishes of Sardinia, page 191.* They likewise fish for coral and a variety of shell-fish. Those most commonly caught are the date,† whose grubs find no difficulty in securing a lodging in the soft and spongy stone of the shore; the *pinna marina*,‡ of which some attain a very large size, being more than two feet in length; the prickly oyster,§ which they catch even within the harbour; the Noah's ark;‖ some species of the telline and trumpet-fish, &c. &c.; they likewise sometimes find, though rarely, the *nautilus papiraceus*.¶

The strata of calcareous substances of the islands of Malta and Gozzi, likewise produce abundantly petrifactions and fossils. It were easy to form ample collections of these. I have seen there sea-urchins transformed to spar, very large vermiculars, oölithes, pisolites, the vertebræ of fishes of an enormous size, huge glossopetres, and very beautiful crapaudines. These two last fossils pass with the common people for the tongues and eyes of serpents, though assuredly there is no great resemblance between them: these are, in their appre-

* *Scamber alalunga pinnis pectoralibus longissimis.* Arted. gen. pisc. 222.—*Scomber pinnis pectoralibus longissimis, pinnulis caudæ utrinque septem.....Scomber alalunga.* Lin. Syst. Nat. See also the Encyclop. method. Hist. des poissons, art. *alalunga*.

† *Pholas dactylus*. Lin. ‡ *Pinna nobilis*. Lin. § *Ostrea varia*. Lin. ‖ *Arca Noæ*. Lin. ¶ *Argonauta argo*. Lin.

hension,

henſion, authentic and irreſiſtible evidence of the miraculous ſervice which St. Paul rendered to their iſland, by deſtroying all the ſerpents. But this is not the only inſtance to prove that, under the hand of ignorance, the hiſtory of nature has become that of ſuperſtition.

CHAP.

CHAP. VI.

Meteorological obſervations—Galleys of Malta—Political and philoſophical glance at the order of Malta—Antiquities and idiom of the iſland of Malta—Malteſe dogs—Paſſage from Malta to the iſland of Candia—Sailing birds—Arrival in Egypt.

DURING our ſtay in Malta, that is, for the ſpace of twelve days, the winds varied from north to north-eaſt, and prevented the ſailing of all veſſels. It blew violently; the ſea was in a dreadful ſtate of agitation, and, what appeared very extraordinary to the inhabitants, it rained inceſſantly. They never have rain in the iſland at this ſeaſon. Perſons worthy of credit declared, that for forty years they had lived there, no rain had ever fallen at the beginning of the month of June. Another ground of ſurprize was, that theſe rains were accompanied by thunder-claps, though no ſuch thing is heard there in ſummer time; whereas they are very frequent and very violent in winter.

This bad weather which, at this ſeaſon, paſſed for a phenomenon, brought in the galleys of the Order. A ſalute of fifteen guns from the *Atalanta* ſignalized their entrance into port, and the gal-

ley

ley of the general ſaluted with four. They were manned, or rather embarraſſed, with an incredible number of hands; the general alone had eight hundred men on board. They were ſuperbly ornamented; gold blazed on the numerous baſſo-relievos, and ſculptures on the ſtern; enormous ſails, ſtriped with blue and white, carried on their middle a great croſs of Malta painted red; their elegant flags floated majeſtically; in a word, every thing concurred, when they were under ſail, to render it a magnificent ſpectacle. But their conſtruction was little adapted either for fighting or for ſtanding foul weather; the Order kept them up, rather as an image of it's ancient ſplendor, than for their utility; it was one of thoſe ancient inſtitutions which had once ſerved to render the brotherhood illuſtrious, but now only atteſted it's feebleneſs and decay.

It is well known that the *hoſpitable brotherhood of St. John of Jeruſalem*, on exchanging this modeſt deſignation for that of *knights*, became rather a military than a religious aſſociation. The ſeries of wars which they had to maintain againſt the Mahometans, had trained them to habits of intrepidity. Their hiſtory is a brilliant ſucceſſion of military exploits; and, whether in giving way to immenſe forces and efforts, they were under the neceſſity of abandoning Rhodes, covered with the glory of having

having made a defence which may be conſidered as a prodigy; whether in braving, at Malta, the fury and the valour of Soliman, they fixed the boundary of the Ottoman career; we ſee them diſplaying, on all occaſions, that heroic courage and ſkill which transform a handful of men into a mighty army.

In order to keep alive this martial ardor, this genius of battles and of victories, it was neceſſary for them to maintain that obſervance of rules, thoſe forms of diſcipline, that auſterity of manners, which conſtitute the force and the permanency of all military eſtabliſhments. But the indolence, or rather the dejection of the Muſſulmans, was the epoch of relaxation in the inſtitutions of the Order. They ſucceſſively diſuſed their exerciſes, frivolous in appearance, but attention to which had formed a nurſery of heroes; luxury aſſumed the place of the noble ſimplicity of ſoldiers; idleneſs, and the corruptive cohorts that march in her train, ſucceeded to the activity, to the almoſt ſeverity of warlike exertion; the hardineſs of camps retired before the effeminacy of cities. The ſtruggle between the knights and Turks had now dwindled into a phantom, of which ſome pitiful expeditions of corſairs kept up the ſhadow; the caravans or cruiſes of the galleys, were now nothing but parties of pleaſure to and from the delicious havens of Sicily; the defence

fence of thoſe ſuperb ramparts, the monuments of the glory of the Order, and of their enemy's ſhame, was confided to foreign and mercenary ſoldiers; and that ſocial energy, which had made one of the greateſt empires of the univerſe to tremble, was no longer exemplified, except in the ſparks of courage occaſionally ſtruck from a few individuals.

A horde of prieſts environed the order of Malta. Every where ambitious and reſtleſs, more audacious under a ſky which, with it's temperature, heated the imagination, they bore with impatience the yoke of the chevaliers. They had oftener than once attempted to ſhake it off, by making uſe of their favourite arts, perfidy, ſuperſtition, and falſehood. Reckoning on relaxation of diſcipline and improvidence, they had dared, not long before our arrival, to take poſſeſſion of one of the forts which defend the very city. This unexpected ſtroke rouſed nevertheleſs, for a moment, that ancient valour, the exerciſe of which ſeemed to be loſt. Fifty knights, with the commander d'Anonville at their head, carried the fort by eſcalade, and ſeized the greateſt part of the inſurgents. This revolt is ſtill the ſubject of much converſation at Malta, and to which the biſhop of the iſland was no ſtranger.

The ſovereignty, at the ſame time, exerciſed by the Order of Malta, over the two little iſles under their

their juriſdiction, was by no means oppreſſive. If the ſtatelineſs of ſome of it's members preſented a ſingular contraſt with their ſtate of nothingneſs, and of diſſimilitude to their predeceſſors, it could affect only the intolerant pride of prieſts. The moſt uſeful claſs, that of huſbandmen, was protected. It was called to recollection through what efforts they ſucceeded in covering, with the riches of fruitful ſeaſons, a ſoil which nature ſeemed to have condemned to barrenneſs; the ſweat of their brow was reſpected, and they gathered in peaceably, free from participation as well as from impoſts, the fruits of their labours. Proſperity cannot but ſmile at an exerciſe of authority ſo rare.

It was undoubtedly a ſtrange policy, that of a perpetual declaration of war, of which difference in religious opinions was the apparent motive: theſe were, in reality, merely the pretext. Charles V., in permitting the eſtabliſhment of the knights of St. John of Jeruſalem, in the iſlands of Malta and Gozzi, exacted of them alliance with him in this ſtate of conſtant hoſtility. But the propagation of the Chriſtian religion was far from being the object which he had in view. The Turks had rendered themſelves at that time formidable; they had puſhed their conqueſts in a manner alarming to the powers of Europe, and the monarch found, in an aſſociation of warriors accuſtomed to make head againſt the

the Muſſulmans, a rampart capable of protecting his own poſſeſſions againſt their enterprizes.

Other nations likewiſe knew how to avail themſelves of the obligations which the Order of Malta had contracted. France, in particular, derived great advantages from them. Though, for many years paſt, that Order had fallen from its ancient grandeur, though it's war with the Turks was now nothing more than an empty bugbear; though, in a word, it's actual hoſtilities, as I have ſaid, were reduced to the cruiſes of a few miſerable privateers, the Malteſe name was ſo formidable in the Turkiſh ſeas, that the appearance of the ſmalleſt felucca carrying the flag of the Order was ſufficient to diffuſe terror, and to prevent the ſhips of the country from venturing out. All carriage of goods, in ſeas where commerce has much activity, was through the medium of foreign bottoms. Marſeilles, and the ſmall ports adjacent, ſent into them annually near five hundred. Theſe veſſels returned, at the end of three years, during which their crews had ſubſiſted at the expence of the Orientaliſts, to enrich our ports with the piaſtres of the Levant, and with about five thouſand ſeamen, whom that ſpecies of coaſting trade had formed and inured to the navigation of a ſea extremely difficult, and embarraſſed with a labyrinth of iſlands and ſhallows. Theſe commercial and maritime riches France owed

owed to the inſtitution of the knights of Malta, and, in this political view, ſhe had an intereſt in maintaining it.

But if politics be the philoſophy of governments, philoſophy is, in it's turn, the politics of humanity, and ſhe took pleaſure in contemplating with a lively intereſt, in this ſame inſtitution, formed of various elements, the germ of concord among nations. In truth, an aſſociation of men of almoſt all the nations of Europe, ſelected, in general, from among thoſe whom a liberal education rendered ſuſceptible of the honourable impreſſions of the ſoul, and of juſt reaſoning; conſtrained to live in an iſland, where they were ſecluded from all ſociety but that of their companions, and from all pleaſures but thoſe which they enjoyed in common; habituated to the ſame exerciſes, ſubjected to the ſame regulations, to the ſame regimen, ſuch an aſſociation, I ſay, was exceedingly well adapted for ſoftening down the diſparates exiſting between nation and nation, and for melting away the harſh ſhades of their characters. And when it is conſidered that the greateſt part of theſe ſame men, on returning to their ſeveral focuſes, were deſtined to the exerciſe of important employments, frequently to fill great political ſtations; when they were all viewed as members of the families ſtyled *illuſtrious* and *puiſſant*, there is

no poſſibility of doubting that, by themſelves or by their influence, they ſhould not frequently moderate the hatred and vehemence of cabinets againſt the compatriots of their comrades, of their friends. Theſe remote cauſes have, perhaps oftener than once, ſtopped the rivulets of human blood, which have but too often moiſtened and profaned the earth; and perhaps too they have prevented the effuſion, at the moment it was going to break forth. It is thus that the Malteſe fraternity, by a ſlow but certain operation, would, probably, have realized that delicious dream of philanthropy, univerſal peace.

It is abundantly evident, and it anſwers no purpoſe to make the remark, that theſe reflections, preſented ſuch as they ſtruck me when on the ſpot, could be of no weight but under the ancient order of things, that is, at the era of my voyage: they have ſince ceaſed to exhibit the ſame intereſt. The French republic, which, in the ſpace of a few years, has hurried through ages of glory, has juſt ſuperſeded the exiſtence of the Order; it has looked down with diſdain on the advantages which that inſtitution procured to France, and the hope of concord, of which it opened a glimpſe to the nations. Speculations like theſe were too narrow for the immenſity of her power. Miſtreſs of the Mediterranean,

diterranean,* by means of the conqueſt of Malta and Gozzi, ſhe has extended her departments as

* Witneſs the complete deſtruction of the Toulon fleet, by a Britiſh ſquadron under Lord Nelſon, off the Mouth of the Nile, the 1ſt and 2d of Auguſt, 1798, an event well known in France previous to the publication of M. Sonnini's Travels. Let the following authentic liſt declare the ſtate of French ſovereignty in the Mediterranean, when this vain-glorious rodomontade was iſſuing from the preſs at Paris:

FRENCH LINE OF BATTLE.

1.	Le Guerrier,	74 guns, 700 men—	*Taken.*
2.	Le Conqueraut,	74 guns, 700 men—	*Taken.*
3.	Le Spartiate,	74 guns, 700 men—	*Taken.*
4.	L'Aquilon,	74 guns, 700 men—	*Taken.*
5.	Le Souvereign Peuple,	74 guns, 700 men—	*Taken.*
6.	Le Franklin,	80 guns, 800 men—	*Taken.*
7.	L'Orient,	120 guns, 1010 men—	*Burnt.*
8.	Le Tonant,	80 guns, 800 men—	*Taken.*
9.	L'Heureux,	74 guns, 700 men—	*Taken.*
10.	Le Timoleon,	74 guns, 700 men—	*Burnt.*
11.	Le Mercure,	74 guns, 700 men—	*Taken.*
12.	Le Guillaume Tell,	80 guns, 800 men—	*Eſcaped.*
13.	Le Genereux,	74 guns, 700 men—	*Eſcaped.*

FRIGATES.

14.	Le Diane,	48 guns, 300 men—	*Eſcaped.*
15.	Le Juſtice,	44 guns, 300 men—	*Eſcaped.*
16.	L'Artemiſe,	36 guns, 250 men—	*Burnt.*
17.	Le Serieuſe,	36 guns, 250 men—	*Diſmaſted and ſunk.*

London Gazette Extraordinary, Oct. 2d, 1798.

"Miſtreſs of the Mediterranean!" Witneſs the blockade of the remainder of the naval force of France in the ports of the Mediterranean, by a Britiſh ſquadron under Earl St. Vincent, this 12th July, 1799. "Let not him who putteth on his har-"neſs, boaſt as he that taketh it off." (BIBLE.)—H. H.

far as the ſeas of the Levant, and thus appropriated to herſelf the commerce of it; while, by her intimate alliances with the nations who can no longer have an intereſt ſeparate from hers, ſhe has accompliſhed the great work of ſocial order, the fraternization of mankind.*

Before the iſland of Malta became the domain of the Brotherhood of St. John of Jeruſalem, it had paſſed ſucceſſively into the hands of ſeveral potentates. From the Carthaginians down to the Arabs it underwent a frequent change of maſters; the veſtiges of antiquity in it are accordingly not few. There was printed at Malta itſelf, in 1794, a work in Italian, on the ſubject of thoſe ancient remains, produced from reſearches made by digging up the ground in 1788.†

If certain perſons are to be believed, the Malteſe language is ſtill more ancient than moſt of the ruins diſcovered there, though it has long paſſed for an uncouth mixture of Arabic and Italian. A learned gentleman of Malta, Antonio Vaſſali, has

* This, tranſlated into the language of truth, means unlimited ſubjection to the tyrannical rule of, they ſay, thirty millions of deſpots.—H. H.

† Degli apanzi di alchuni antichiſſimi edifici, ſcoperti in Malta; diſſertatione ſtorica-critica del March. Barbaro archit. con copioſe annotazione del medezimo autore, 1794, in 4to. fig.

lately

lately vindicated his nation from the imputation of having no idiom peculiar to itſelf, and he demonſtrates that their language is entitled to rank with the moſt copious living languages.*

There is rarely to be ſeen now in Malta, the beautiful ſpecies of ſpaniel, with a long ſilky fleece, which goes by the name of the *dog of Malta*, and is different from the *lap-dog*, with which it has been confounded in books of Natural Hiſtory. The breed of theſe little dogs ſeems to be almoſt extinct even at Malta, for you ſeldom meet with one. But it was eaſy to procure there puppies of a beautiful ſpecies of pointers. This calls to my recollection that I no where ſaw ſo many and ſuch beautiful terriers, as in the ſtreets of Genoa.

The ſtorm having ſpent itſelf, and the wind come round, we left the port of Malta June 7th, 1777, at three o'clock afternoon, and ſet ſail for the iſland of Candia. We had then in company a felucca, of which M. Tott had made a purchaſe, for the purpoſe of examining the coaſts which the frigate could not approach; ſhe was manned with Malteſe ſeamen. This was one of the ideas with which the

* Vocabulary of the Malteſe language, by Antonio Vaſſali, printed at Rome in 1796. See the Encyclop. Mag. intereſting and valuable collection, Vol. IV. of the ſecond year, p. 139.

ſomewhat whimſical imagination of M. Tott frequently teemed: it was ſubjecting the navigation of the frigate to a very unpleaſant embarraſſment, the felucca not being able to ſail at the ſame rate, and totally unfit for encountering a gale of wind. The captain ſoon tired of ſuch a convoy, and I have been informed that ſoon after he left Alexandria he ſtaved and ſunk her.

On the morning of the 8th, the weather being extremely fine, and a light breeze from the north-weſt, a bird of prey, which appeared to me to be a male ſparrow-hawk,* came and perched on the yards of the frigate; we were from fourteen to fifteen leagues from all land. The ſailors called him a *corſair*, becauſe he cruiſes to catch on their paſſage quails, and other migrant birds which croſs and re-croſs thoſe ſeas, a tranſit expoſed to manifold dangers. Sometimes precipitated into the billows by the impetuoſity of the blaſt; ſometimes torn in pieces by the cruel pounces of cruiſers winged like themſelves, thoſe intereſting and defenceleſs creatures on arriving upon the ſhores which promiſed them repoſe, after ſo many dangers and fatigues, rarely eſcape the death prepared for them by man, the moſt voracious and the moſt pitileſs of all their enemies.

* Epervier, Hiſt. Nat. des Oiſ.—*Falconiſus*. Lin.

Our

Our courſe lay eaſtward, and the wind ſoon came to blow from that quarter. It not only remained contrary for two days, but likewiſe became very violent, and agitated the ſea to ſuch a degree that the ſhip laboured exceedingly. The bird, the forerunner of ſtorms,* appeared in our wake, and we prepared for what was haſtening to overtake us.

On the 12th, with a clear ſky, and our ſails filled with a favourable gale, we came in ſight of the iſland of Cerigo, the ancient Cythera, where Venus landed when ſhe aroſe out of the foam of the ocean. Situated at the entrance of the Archipelago of the Levant, that iſland actually conſtitutes part of the French Republic, under the name of the *department of the Egean ſea*.† It befitted the moſt amiable nation in the univerſe to poſſeſs a ſpot which antiquity has conſecrated to the loveliеſt of goddeſſes.

We likewiſe diſcovered, at a ſmall diſtance from the department of the Egean ſea, four parched rocks, uninhabited, and cut perpendicularly. *Ovo* (the egg), whoſe form is, in reality, abundantly

* L'Oiſeau de tempête,—*procellaria pelagica*, Lin.

† "Department of the Egean ſea!!!" What ridiculous republican jargon! "The moſt amiable of nations—the love-"lieſt of goddeſſes!!!" and all this nonſenſe in a grave book of travels through Egypt.—H. H.

ſimilar to that of an egg; the two *Couffes*, which are a tolerable repreſentation of the ſpecies of panniers that go by that name in the commerce of the Levant; finally, the *Cerigotte*, or little *Cerigo*. On the 13th we dropped anchor in the deep bay of Suda, in the iſle of Candia.

The day after our departure from Malta, the very day that a hawk perched on the frigate's ſail-yards, two other birds, a little gray-ſparrow,* and a yellow wag-tail,† likewiſe alighted on the rigging. But leſs in a condition to ſupport the fatigue of a long flight, they ſuffered themſelves to be caught. As their ſize did not promiſe a great repaſt to the appetite of the glutton, I prevailed ſo far as to have them committed to my care. I carried them into the great cabin, and there, after having laviſhed careſſes on them, which their ſtate of diſquiet permitted them not to feel, I ſet them at liberty. Whether they had a preſentiment of the tempeſt which attacked us the day after, whether that, diſcovering no land, they were afraid to venture themſelves on a boundleſs ſea, after a few moments of uncertain flight, they re-entered by the ſame window from which I had let them go. From that moment they quitted not the great ca-

† Paſſerinette, or little ſparrow. Buffon, Hiſt. Nat. des Oiſ. & pl. enlum. No. 579, fig. 2. *Motacilla paſſerina*. Lin.

† *Motacilla baarula*. Lin.

bin,

bin, and if, terrified by any extraordinary noiſe, they flew out by one of the poop-windows, or by a port-hole, they returned preſently ſome other way. Though of different ſpecies, they lived on the beſt terms with each other; they hopped about merrily on thoſe terrible machines which hurl from afar thunder and death; nay, on a cannon was placed their little portion of freſh water and their crumb of bread; this was likewiſe their place of repoſe. Their confidence became complete: they fluttered around a daily and ſomewhat noiſy table of twenty perſons; and theſe lovely gueſts cheered with their warblings, and by their lively and graceful movements, a habitation ſo dry and ſo monotonous. On our approach to the coaſt of the iſle of Candia, our pretty and intereſting navigators were eager to take their flight thither, and withdrew from us, regaling our ears with airy whiſtlings, the ſweet accents expreſſive of their joy, perhaps of their gratitude. Charming birds! you forſook a manſion of dullneſs and inſipidity, to which you communicated an appearance of life, and you went to animate enchanting groves already embelliſhed by all the bounties of indulgent nature. May you long remain there a teſtimony of your proſperous voyage, and there recollect that amidſt the horror of tempeſt, and of billows in a rage; that amongſt men whom the neceſſity of braving, night and day, dangers inceſſant, ſeemed

to

to render little ſuſceptible of the gentler affections of the ſoul, you met with beings ſenſible and compaſſionate.

I had occaſion to return twice afterwards to ancient Crete: the obſervations which I made there, will naturally find their place in my *Travels through Greece*, which will immediately follow the preſent publication. On the other hand, the pages of my journal, which contained the paſſage from the bay of Suda to Alexandria, are loſt; but I recollect perfectly, that they contained no detail of much importance. We made a ſhort ſtop at Paleo-Caſtro, on cape Solomon, the eaſternmoſt point of the iſle of Candia. This is a region deſtitute of every ſpecies of habitation, except the huts of ſhepherds. The ſight of a ſhip of war, accompanied by a felucca, made us paſs, in the imagination of thoſe harmleſs ſwains, for a Malteſe armament; they took to flight with their flocks into the interior of the iſland, and abandoned to us a coaſt which our very appearance had in an inſtant converted into a deſert. It did not require much time to waft us to Alexandria, and a few days were ſufficient to convey us to the low and ſandy ſhores of Egypt.

CHAP.

CHAP. VII.

Deſerts of Lybia—Coaſts of Egypt—Towers of the Arabs—Landing at Alexandria—It's ports—It's commerce—Glimpſe of the city of Alexandria.

WHEN in going before the wind eaſtward, in ſight of the coaſt of Africa, you have paſſed *Derna*,* where veſſels loaded by the Turks ſometimes ſtop, there remains, up to Alexandria, a long extent of ſhore entirely unknown. It is in the midſt of thoſe burning plains of Lybia, a domain never to be refcued from ſterility, that we are to look for the weſtern boundaries of Egypt; boundaries left undetermined from the remoteſt antiquity. Diſputes had ariſen between the two colonies ſettled on the banks of the lake Maréotis, now dried up, reſpecting the confines of Egypt and Lybia; they conſulted the oracle of Jupiter-Ammon; his deciſion was, as Herodotus relates, that all the country which the Nile inundated, by it's overflowing, ſhould belong to the former of theſe two countries; a very uncertain line of demarkation, as it depended on the greater or leſs degree of labour and induſtry employed to convey the waters of the river to different diſtances. Of

* Probably the *Derrhis extrema* of Strabo and Ptolomy.

what

what importance is it, after all, to make an exact diviſion of thoſe ſandy heaps, thoſe immenſe blanks on the habitable globe, and which no nation can have an intereſt to parcel out, as no man can poſſibly convert them into a habitation.

But if thoſe ſhores preſent nothing attractive to commerce or to curioſity, they oppoſe tremendous riſks to navigation. Scarcely raiſed above the level of the ſea, they are not perceptible at any diſtance. A veſſel with this coaſt on her lee, under a wind blowing in-ſhore, in that prodigious bay, laid down in our geographical charts under the name of the *Gulf of the Arabs*, has no ſhelter to expect; no port, no road opens to her a ſafe retreat; and if it be impoſſible for her to brave the impetuoſity of the winds and waves which are driving her toward the land, ſhe muſt be loſt. There is no confidence to be placed in the aſſertion of certain Arabs who indicated to me, in the gulf which bears their name, three ports, one of which they repreſented as affording excellent anchorage, and which they called *Port Soliman*. It would be madneſs in navigators to expoſe themſelves, on the faith of information ſo very problematical; and on the ſuppoſition that they might, in reality, have the good fortune, in deſperate ſituations, to find ſome refuge there, they would run an incredible riſk, unleſs their ſhips were better armed than moſt of thoſe

thoſe which cover the ſeas of the Levant, of a total loſs, in a region abandoned to the pillage of Africans.

To make the land of Alexandria is likewiſe attended with difficulty and danger: this part of Egypt is ſo low, that much circumſpection is requiſite toward a ſafe approach to it. If your courſe is from the Lybian ſide, that is, from the weſt, the firſt indication of the land of Egypt is *Abouſir*, called by Europeans, *the Towers of the Arabs*. Theſe are two eminences, on each of which a tower is conſtructed. They are diſtinguiſhable at ſea four leagues off. One of theſe towers is round, the other ſquare. At leaſt this is the appearance which they preſented to my eye, on viewing them from the offing. It would appear, nevertheleſs, that their forms are different from what I ſuppoſed them at a diſtance; for Granger, who ſeems to have made a ſurvey of the edifices, deſcribes them differently.*

That

* "On the weſtern extremity of this lake [Maréotis], is to "be ſeen the tower of the Arabs, called, by the people of the "country, the caſtle of Abouſir. It is indeed a ſquare tower, "fourſcore feet high, the faces of which are each two hun-"dred and fifty feet broad; built of very beautiful hewn "ſtone; the walls are fourteen feet thick. At the diſtance of "the quarter of a league from this caſtle, there is a tower, "ſquare below, and the upper part round; and, ſix leagues "from thence, ſtill to the weſtward, there is another, on the

"walls

That part of the coaſt of Egypt, which is ſituated to the eaſt of Alexandria, is eaſily diſtinguiſhable from that to the weſtward. It is not ſo low, and is interſected by more inequalities; neither is it quite ſo naked: ſome traces of cultivation are diſcernible, ſome date-trees and human habitations. In a word, it is a ſure ſign that you are in the direction of Alexandria, when you get ſight of Pompey's pillar, and, previous to that, of two little riſing grounds, which are behind the preſent city, and within the precincts of the old. But from whatever quarter you approach thoſe dangerous ſhores, it is impoſſible to employ too much circumſpection, becauſe all theſe indications are not viſible at any great diſtance, and becauſe the currents get hold of ſhips, and carry them towards Africa with a rapidity which it is eaſier to foreſee than to calculate.

Two ports, equally ſpacious, preſent themſelves to veſſels intending to caſt anchor cloſe to Alexandria. The one, which is to the weſtward of the city, is called the *old harbour:* it's entrance is ſomewhat difficult, on account of two ſhallows, which leave but a narrow channel between them; but it's interior is a deep baſon, where there is good

"walls of which are to be ſeen the remains of an Arabic in-
"ſcription. All theſe edifices are falling into ruins."—Granger, Relation of a Voyage to Egypt in 1730. p. 221.

anchorage

anchorage and ſhelter in the worſt of weather. The other, which is to the eaſt, and ſeparated from the former by a peninſula of no great breadth, has got the name of *new harbour*; it has but a ſmall depth of water; it is encumbered with a multitude of rocks and ſhelfs, and is entirely expoſed to the north winds. If, notwithſtanding, any one were to imagine that this laſt port is almoſt entirely neglected, he would deceive himſelf. Fanaticiſm, in this caſe, carried the day againſt a rational and intelligent regard to intereſt. While the Alexandrians cheerfully aſſociated with the nations of Europe in commercial operations, they refuſed to European veſſels the means of maintaining, without riſk, an intercourſe from which they derived ſo many advantages. The veſſels of the diſciples of Mahomet alone were permitted to enter the old harbour; and, were the ſhips of other nations to be wrecked, for want of a ſafe retreat, they had not the power of penetrating into a ſanctuary ſo abſurdly and ſo impolitically privileged.

At the entrance of new harbour is a ſhelf called the *Diamond*. It is neceſſary to ſteer very cloſe to it, in order to eſcape the ſhallows which are on the other ſide, and which, covered only with a few feet water, are but the more dangerous. The *Diamond*, as well as the rocks adjacent on a level with

with the water, may probably be part of the ruins of the ancient Pharos; ſo that in modern times veſſels are ſhipwrecked on the fragments of the nobleſt monument that ever was reared for their preſervation.

The ſandy bottom of new harbour is filled with rocks and rubbiſh; and this humid field of ruin frequently becomes that of the moſt horrible deſolation. Cables are worn and cut to pieces by continual friction on the ſtones. Ships preſſing on each other in one line of direction along the ridge, are hardly able to reſiſt the violence of the north wind, and the fury of the billows which it raiſes, eſpecially in the winter time, that is, during the months of November, December, and January, the period when the air is a little cooled by the rains and ſtormy gales. On the approach of thoſe tempeſts, the crews deſert their ſhips, for fear of being daſhed in pieces with them on the mercileſs ſhore. The firſt ſhip whoſe cables give way falls upon her next neighbour, and forces her from her moorings; the two together are driven with increaſed violence upon a third, which is incapable of withſtanding the increaſed ſhock, and, in an inſtant, the whole ſeries is confounded, craſhed to fragments, ſwallowed up. Scarcely a year paſſes at Alexandria, without exhibiting diſaſters of this ſort,

fort, which would be ſufficient to render its port unfrequented, could the love of gain be diſcouraged by dangers.

Ships of war, which require a depth of water, are under the neceſſity of mooring as ſoon as they have doubled the *Diamond* and the two *ſhallows*, that is juſt in the mouth of the harbour. The frigate *Atalanta* paſſed above a month in this ſituation, violently ſtrained by a continual rolling; a moſt uncomfortable poſition, which, however, I preferred ſharing with my friends to a ſettlement on ſhore, though I had it in my power, as it was my deſtination to remain in Egypt. This abominable harbour is ſtill more rocky to the eaſt. It is unapproachable to any thing deſerving the name of a ſhip, and landing is impracticable. We endeavoured, to no purpoſe, to get on ſhore in a ſmall boat, with a deſign to take a view of the obeliſks which are on that ſide. It was well we did not periſh by the violent and repeated ſtrokes which the boat ſuffered on the ſtones from the agitation of the water.

The harbour, deteſtable as it is, nevertheleſs ſeldom fails to be crowded with ſhips. The perpetual movement in it indicates the reſtleſsneſs of commerce. Here the riches of Aſia and Africa are loaded for the ports of Europe, and here are unloaded the productions of European arts and manufacture.

nufacture. A geographical poſition of ſuch high importance, could not eſcape the genius of Alexander. Amidſt the rapidity of his conqueſts he perceived, that in this place might be erected the theatre of mutual communication with all nations, and ſuddenly he preſented Alexandria to the admiration and to the commerce of mankind. Dinocrates had traced the plan of it under the eyes of Alexander, and ſuperintended the execution of it. He was one of thoſe men of vaſt and bold conceptions, whom Nature is frugal in ſhewing to the world. Hiſtory has tranſmitted to us a remarkable and characteriſtic trait of his genius. With a deſign to perpetuate the name and glory of the greateſt of conquerors, by a monument that ſhould laſt for ever, he had propoſed to conſecrate to this purpoſe a part of the globe itſelf; by cutting an enormous mountain, Mount Athos, into a ſtatue of him that ſhould never be removed, having the ſolid earth for it's baſis; a work that muſt have effaced all the prodigies which even Egypt has produced. Sublime idea! It renders the artiſt worthy of ranking with his hero.

With an Alexander to order the plan of a city, and a Dinocrates to carry it into execution, ſome conception may be formed how grand and magnificent this city muſt have been. The kings of Egypt farther embelliſhed it by admirable eſtabliſhments,

bliſhments, the loſs of which muſt excite regret. Under the reign of one of the Ptolomies, Soſtrates, another architect of Cnidus, conſtructed a pharos which the ancients reckoned among the ſeven wonders of the univerſe. Another king founded an immenſe library. Alexandria, in a word, became the centre of ſcience and riches: it was the ſpot of the globe where commerce flouriſhed to the greateſt extent. Joſephus aſſures us, that it contributed more to the Roman treaſury in a month, than all the reſt of Egypt did in a year. The uſeful and the agreeable arts were there cultivated with ſimilar ſucceſs. Luxury crept in, and ſoon attained its full height; lively and brilliant pleaſures degenerated into licentiouſneſs: faſtidiouſneſs in delicacies became proverbial; morals were corrupted, and Alexandria was undone. A terrible example, but conſtantly thrown away upon the nations.

I ſhall not undertake to give a deſcription of that renowned city of Alexander. Many others, without my aid, have endeavoured to execute that taſk. Beſides, details of this kind belong to the province of Hiſtory, and I muſt not forget that a traveller is to give an account of what he has ſeen, and not of what he has read. Monuments which once promiſed to brave the attacks of time, have crumbled into duſt with the city which they were

reared to decorate: the flames which ferocity and ignorance directed have devoured the library of the Ptolomies: the pharos is buried under the waters of the ſea, and the tower which, in modern times, ſerves as a light-houſe, does not ſo much as indicate the ſpot where it ſtood. Modern Alexandria occupies only a very ſmall part of the ground encompaſſed by the city which Alexander raiſed; it is merely a city, or rather a town, of yeſterday, containing nothing of the ancient city but a few ſcattered fragments. The character of the inhabitants, the ſtate of ſcience, of the arts, of commerce itſelf, in ſhort every thing is narrowed; and if the mind were not ſupported by feeding on the remains of a city once ſo ſuperb, no one could have the courage to ſpeak a word of that which now is.

CHAP.

CHAP. VIII.

Modern Alexandria—Its Inhabitants—Jews—Spirit of revenge—Aſſaſſination of the Conſul of Alexandria, and of a Dutchman—Language—Ruins.

I MUST advertiſe the Reader, that having ſojourned oftener than once at Alexandria, I ſhall preſent my obſervations in a regular ſeries, though made at different eras. I ſhall quit therefore, for a few moments, the form of the relation, and ſhall deſcribe, by a ſingle ſtroke, what I ſaw there at ſeveral intervals, and without reſtricting myſelf to the order of the dates of my ſeveral remarks. I ſhall obſerve the ſame rule, which appeared to me more natural, and more commodious to the public, when I have to ſpeak of any other object which I may have viſited at different times.

"To write on the ſubject of the city of Alex-"andria minutely, after ſo many great perſonages," ſays an excellent obſerver who travelled in Egypt, in the reign of Francis I. "would be only to ſay "the ſame thing over again."* Since the era at which Bellon wrote, many authors, among whom may be reckoned *more than one great perſonage*, have

* Bellon Obſerv. book II. ch. 19.

given a deſcription of the remains of that celebrated city, and it is not poſſible, at preſent, to avoid *repetitions*. But, without mentioning ſome new obſervations with which the remains of ancient Alexandria have furniſhed me, the curioſity of thoſe who may be diſpoſed to read my book would be little gratified, and their expectation would be diſappointed, if, in order to make them acquainted with what ſtill exiſts in regions of ſuch high renown, I ſhould refer them to any other books beſides my own. Beſides, I ſhall ſpeak only of objects which I have perſonally examined.

The latitude of Alexandria has been laid down, by ancient aſtronomers, with ſufficient accuracy. Ptolemy, who was himſelf an Egyptian, had placed it, in his geography, in 31° of north latitude, and in 30° 58′ in his Almageſte. Eratoſthenes, more exact, fixed it at 31° 12′, which comes extremely near the obſervations of modern aſtronomers, to whom the progreſs of the ſcience, with the aſſiſtance of better inſtruments, procured ſuperior advantages. It has been determined by Chazelle, of the Academy of Sciences at Paris, to be in 30° 11′ 20″. Its longitude is 47° 56′ 33″.

The new city, or rather the town of Alexandria, is built, the greateſt part of it at leaſt, on the brink of the ſea. It's houſes, like all thoſe of the Levant, have

have flat terrace roofs: they have no windows, and the apertures which ſupply their place are almoſt entirely obſtructed by a wooden lattice projecting, of various form, and ſo cloſe, that the light can hardly force a paſſage. In thoſe countries, more than any where elſe, ſuch inventions, which transform a manſion into a priſon, are real *jalouſies* (jealouſies, window-blinds). It is through this grate of iron or wood, ſometimes of elegant conſtruction, that beauty is permitted to ſee what is paſſing without, but eternally deprived of the privilege of being ſeen; it is in this ſtate of hopeleſs ſecluſion that, far from receiving the homage which nature demands to be paid to it by every being poſſeſſed of ſenſibility, it meets only contempt and outrage; it is there, in a word, that one part of the human race, abuſing the odious right of the more powerful, retains in degrading ſervitude the other part, whoſe charms alone ought to have had the power to ſoften both the ruggedneſs of the ſoil and the ferocity of their tyrants.

Narrow and aukwardly diſpoſed ſtreets are without pavement as without police; no public edifice, no private building arreſts the eye of the traveller, and, on the ſuppoſition that the fragments of the old city had not attracted his attention, he would find no object in the preſent one that could ſupply

matter for a moment's thought. Turks, Arabians, Barbareſques, Cophts, Chriſtians of Syria, Jews, conſtituted a population which may be eſtimated at five thouſand, as far as an eſtimation can be made in a country where there is no regiſter kept of any thing. Commerce attracts thither beſides, from all the countries of the eaſt, ſtrangers whoſe reſidence is extremely tranſient. This motley aſſemblage of the men of different nations, jealous of, and almoſt always hoſtile to each other, would preſent to the eye of the obſerver a ſingular mixture of cuſtoms, manners and dreſs, if a reſort of thieves and robbers could repay the trouble of obſervation.

You ſee them crowd on each other in the ſtreets, running rather than walking: they likewiſe bawl rather than ſpeak. I have frequently ſtopped to conſider ſome perſons who had all the appearance of being agitated by violent rage: they gave to their voice all the intenſity which a broad and brawny cheſt could ſupply; their phyſionomy wore all the traits of paſſion; their eyes ſparkled; violent geſtures accompanied modes of expreſſion which ſeemed ſtill more violent. I approached them under the apprehenſion that they were going inſtantly to cut each others throats, and was aſtoniſhed to learn that they were only driving ſome petty bargain, that not a word was of a threatening complexion:

complexion: that their exterior alone was in motion; that, in a word, all this vehemence was only their uſual mode of buying and ſelling.

This cuſtom of giving to the voice the moſt powerful inflection of which it is capable, in ſpeaking, is common to almoſt all the eaſtern nations, the Turks excepted, whoſe habits and deportment are more grave and compoſed.* There is no perſon amongſt us but who muſt have remarked that the Jews, that nation which has contrived to preſerve it's own character and uſages, in the midſt of other nations among whom they have been diſperſed, likewiſe ſpeak extremely loud, particularly to one another. If you except a few individuals of them, whoſe conſtraint, in an affected imitation of our manners, ſufficiently evinces that they are not natural to them, you ſee them likewiſe, when they march through our ſtreets, with the body ſtooping forward, and without bending the knee, taking ſhort but briſk and hurried ſteps, which come nearer to running than the uſual proceſs of walking. They are found again in Egypt, where they live in a ſtate of abjection ſtill greater than elſe-

* "The Hindoos ſpeak in a very loud tone of voice, which "appeared to me diſagreeable, till habit, which reconciles us "to every thing, rendered it familiar to me." Letter of a gentleman who paſſed ſeveral years in the military ſervice of the Engliſh Eaſt-India-Company at Bombay, inſerted into Voyages in Europe, Aſia and Africa, by Mackintoſh, vol. I.

where,

where, ſuch as we know them to be, avaricious, dexterous, inſinuating, and low cheaters. Their depredations are not like thoſe of the Bedouins and the other thieves of Egypt, neither committed with manly intrepidity, nor with open violence: they are, as in Europe, ingenious ſharping tricks, officious over-reachings which fill their own purſe, and, without making a noiſe, empty that of their neighbour. Such are the Jews wherever I have met with them; in all places their indelible vices of character appear, ſo long as they perſiſt in keeping within the line which they have drawn between themſelves and other nations; it is likewiſe obſervable, that in all places they practiſe the ſame methods, the ſame craft, the ſame knavery, the real plagues of ſocial order; in a word, that ſame inſenſibility, that ſame ingratitude, with which they have recently repaid the generoſity and magnanimity of the French nation.

Some Jeweſſes of Alexandria had, during my reſidence there, opened their houſes for the reception of Europeans; they were deficient neither in beauty nor wit: their ſociety was by no means without it's allurements, and if there was ground to accuſe them of rather an immoderate appetite for filthy lucre, the diſtinctive characteriſtic of the male part of their nation, their impoſition was at leaſt more palatable, their deceptions leſs provoking,

voking, and it was no difficult matter to forgive them.

It is abundantly obvious of what exceſſes men are capable, who, in the moſt ordinary tranſactions, diſplay the ſymptoms of fury. When their ſoul is elevated, when it partakes of the impetuous movements of the body, they diſdain all reſtraint. Like an overbearing torrent, which ſtrikes terror at once by it's noiſe, and by the ravages which it commits, they abandon themſelves to all the vehemence of paſſion; then it is they really approximate to the ſavage animals which come to diſpute with them the poſſeſſion of the ſands which they are equally eager and intelligent to ſtain with blood. Hence the inſurrections, the tumultuous riots by which Europeans have often ſuffered ſo ſeverely. It is worthy of being remarked, that this irritable character, this proneneſs to ſedition, likewiſe was, though with leſs rage, that of the ancient inhabitants of Alexandria.

If there be altars dedicated to the demon of revenge, in Egypt undoubtedly are the temples which contain them: there ſhe is the goddeſs, or rather the tyrant of the human heart. Not only the generality of the men, whoſe combination conſtituted the maſs of the inhabitants, never forgive, but, however ſignal the reparation made, they never

never reſt ſatisfied till they have themſelves dipped their hands in the blood of the perſon whom they have declared to be their enemy. Though they ſmother reſentment long, and diſſemble till they find a favourable opportunity to glut it, the effects are not the leſs terrible: they are not for that more conformable to the principles of reaſon. If a European, or, to uſe their term, a *Franc*, has provoked their animoſity, they let it fall without diſcrimination on the head of a European, without troubling themſelves to enquire whether the party were the relation, the friend, or even the compatriot of the perſon from whom they received the offence: thus they purge their reſentment of the only pretext which could plead it's excuſe, and their vengeance is downright atrocity.

Alexandria was ſtill ringing, at the time of my arrival at that city, with the noiſe of an aſſaſſination committed, a few years before, on the perſon of the repreſentative of the French nation, in that port.* A French hair-dreſſer was taking the diverſion of ſhooting in the environs of the town; an Arab picked a quarrel with him, which unfortunately terminated in his diſcharging his piece at

* Citizen Volney has related this anecdote in his *Travels through Egypt and Syria*. Our accounts do not perfectly agree. I give the fact as I had it from eye-witneſſes, and whoſe recollection of it was ſtill freſh.

the

the Arab, and killing him. This murder was preſently noiſed abroad. The people took fire, and, in their tranſport, reſolved to ſacrifice every European they could lay hold of. Their fury was with no little difficulty appeaſed, by delivering up the murderer to them, whom they hanged in the public ſquare; but an Arab, the brother of him who was killed, though a witneſs of the execution, did not think himſelf ſufficiently revenged; he bound himſelf by an oath to ſacrifice the firſt *Franc* he ſhould meet to the manes of his brother.

All Europeans confined themſelves to their homes for three whole months, in hope that the wrath of this man would ſubſide. At the expiration of that period, and on information ſufficient to ſet their minds at reſt, they believed it ſafe to go abroad. For eight days they appeared as uſual, in the city and in the country, and no one had been in the leaſt moleſted. The conſul had not hitherto dared to ſhew himſelf: at length he thought that he too might take the air, without running any riſk. He went to walk with a janiſary of his guard on the bank of the canal. Unfortunately for him, the Arab who, with the ſentiment of revenge carefully treaſured up in his heart, went conſtantly armed with a determination to gratify it, happened to be in the ſame quarter. He approached the Frenchman, who was under no manner of apprehenſion,

and

and, daſtardly as cruel, brought him down to the ground by a gun-ſhot fired through his back. The janiſary, inſtead of taking vengeance on the aſſaſſin, or at leaſt of aſſiſting the man whom it was his duty to protect, fled off as faſt as his heels could carry him, and the unfortunate conſul died of the wound a few hours after. The French merchants diſpatched a faſt ſailing boat to Conſtantinople, to demand juſtice. The Ottoman Porte ſent officers with ſtrict and ſevere orders on the ſubject; but theſe orders, at firſt evaded, remained finally unexecuted. The villain did not ſo much as quit the city, but ſhewed himſelf openly with impunity. The merchants were under the neceſſity of concealing their reſentments for the ſake of their own ſafety; and, beſide the affront offered to the French nation by the unpuniſhed aſſaſſination of her delegate, the national commerce had to regret the expenditure of conſiderable ſums, fruitleſsly laid out in demanding a juſt reparation.

Events of this kind, unhappily, were not ſufficiently rare to enſure the tranquillity of thoſe who were obliged to live in Egypt, and in ſome parts of Syria, where the people, beſide their vicinity, have a conſiderable reſemblance to thoſe of Egypt. Toward the end of October, 1731, the Dutch *drogman* or interpreter at Aleppo, was walking for amuſement with his conſul. The peaſants of a village

village adjacent thought proper to accuſe him of having occaſioned the death of a young man who had drowned himſelf, and whoſe body they were dragging out of the water. An accuſation ſo abſurd was ſupported by the whole village. The cry for vengeance was univerſal. They ſent a deputation to the Pacha of Aleppo, demanding that the Dutchman might be given up to them. The governor refuſed. The villagers ſtirred up the populace of Aleppo. A formidable mob threatened to ſet fire to the city, and to maſſacre all the *Francs*, unleſs the *drogman*, who had fled for refuge to the Pacha's palace, was delivered up to them. That officer, though perfectly convinced of the Dutchman's innocence, was obliged, in order to prevent the moſt dreadful outrages, to order the ill-fated European to be ſtrangled, and his body to be given to the mutineers, who hanged it up on a tree.

The picture which I have juſt preſented of the manners of the inhabitants of modern Alexandria, gloomy as it may be, is by no means overcharged. I have painted them ſuch as I have ſeen them. I might appeal, in ſupport of what I have ſaid, to the teſtimony of the moſt reſpectable travellers, and eſpecially to that of the Europeans whom public employments, commercial ſpeculations, or curioſity, may have induced to reſide any length of time

at

at Alexandria, and who have been the witneſſes, perhaps the victims, of this character of ferocity. If, on the entrance of a victorious army, they knew how to aſſume the appearance of good people, it is not to be wondered at. The cruelleſt of men is commonly the moſt abject; he has no valour, unleſs when he is ſure of being the ſtronger; he fawns the moment he feels himſelf weak; but he retains his character of perfidy and treaſon, and thoſe arms of grovelling ſouls he will certainly employ, as often as he thinks he can paſs undiſcovered.

The Arabic is the language generally ſpoken at Alexandria, as well as all over Egypt. But moſt of the Alexandrians, thoſe in particular whom commercial intercourſe brings into contact with the merchants of Europe, ſpeak likewiſe the Italian, adopted in the ports of the Levant. The *moreſco* or *lingua franca* is likewiſe ſpoken there; it is a compound of bad Italian, Spaniſh and Arabic. A ſtranger could, more eaſily there than any where elſe, provide himſelf with domeſtics, who, if they were not of approved fidelity, had at leaſt the facility of making themſelves underſtood by perſons not well verſed in the Arabic. A *Serdar*, an officer of no great conſideration, had the command there, and his power did not always extend ſo far as to overawe an ungovernable populace.

A wide

A wide extent of ſand and duſt, an accumulation of rubbiſh, was an abode worthy of the colony of Alexandria, and every day they were labouring hard to increaſe the horror of it. Columns ſubverted and ſcattered about; a few others ſtill upright, but iſolated; mutilated ſtatues, capitals, entablatures, fragments of every ſpecies overſpread the ground with which it is ſurrounded. It is impoſſible to advance a ſtep, without kicking, if I may uſe the expreſſion, againſt ſome of thoſe wrecks. It is the hideous theatre of deſtruction the moſt horrible. The ſoul is ſaddened, on contemplating thoſe remains of grandeur and magnificence, and is rouſed into indignation againſt the barbarians who dared to apply a ſacrilegious hand to monuments which time, the moſt pitileſs of devourers, would have reſpected.

CHAP IX.

Enclosure of Alexandria by the Arabs—Cleopatra's needles—Cleopatra—Palace of the kings of Egypt—Pompey's column.

THE enclosure of the city of Alexandria, once so vast, being several leagues in circumference, and containing near a million of inhabitants, had been contracted by the Arabs on their invasion of it. It is this new enclosure, formed of a hundred arched towers and solid walls, which encompass modern Alexandria, the state of which, as we have seen in the preceding chapter, was so deplorable. But, too small for a zone of such extent, the existing city is far from occupying the whole interior of it: it is separated from the precinct by prodigious intervals, which present only the image of the most complete devastation, of piles of rubbish, and of wreck scattered about. Some authors pretend that these are the very walls which Alexander had ordered to be built. This opinion, long ago abandoned, has of late been revived by M. Tott;* but their architecture has nothing similar to that of the Greeks or of the Romans: it is evidently in the style of the Arabs, and of the

* Memoirs of the Baron de Tott, vol. ii. p. 180.

same

ſame kind with that of the walls of Cairo, which were inconteſtably built by them. The columns, and other fragments of monuments really antique, employed in building them, prove, beyond the power of contradiction, that their conſtruction is more modern; and the inſcriptions in Arabic and Kufique characters, with which the towers are charged in ſeveral places, leave no doubt with reſpect to their origin. It never was called in queſtion by the greateſt part of travellers, of whom I ſhall ſatisfy myſelf with quoting one, the learned Pocock, whoſe reſearches into antiquity are, of all others, the moſt profound. "It was," ſays he, "in the year 600 of the Hegira, anſwering to the "year 1212 of the Chriſtian era, that one of the "ſucceſſors of Saladin, who had juſt taken Egypt "out of the hands of the caliphs of the race of "Fatima, ordered the walls of modern Alexandria "to be reared: he employed in this work, which "is two French leagues in circumference, the "wreck of the ancient city. The walls, and the "hundred towers which flank them, are compoſed "of fragments of marble and broken columns, "confounded with common ſtones."*

The thick walls, and the hundred towers with which they are flanked, embrace only, as we ſee from this quotation, a circuit of about two leagues,

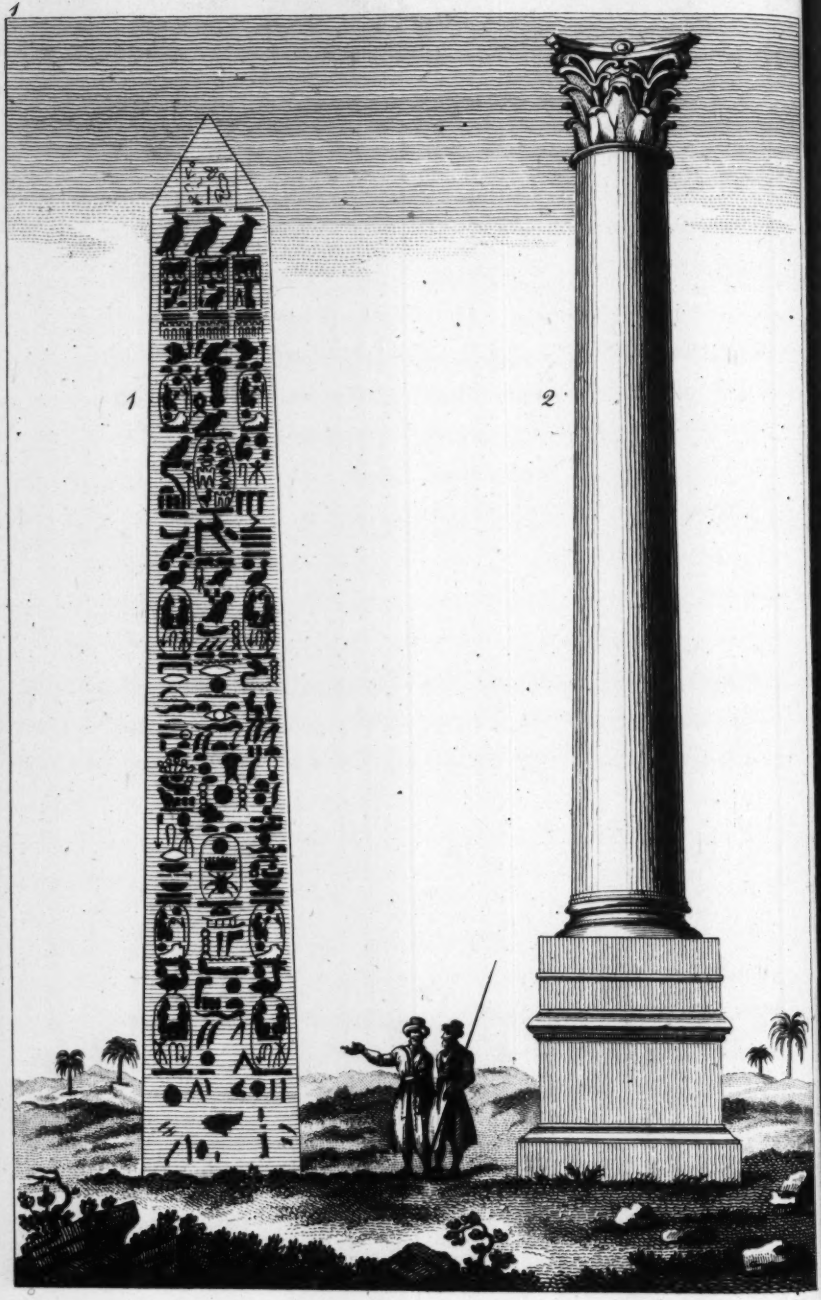
* Richard Pocock's Travels, vol. i. p. 493.

whereas, according to the moſt accurate meaſurements, the city of ancient Alexandria was from ſeven to eight leagues in circumference.* The materials employed in the conſtruction of ſome of thoſe towers, beſides the fragments of the more ancient monuments, are of a ſingular ſpecies, and of which no traveller, ſo far as I know, has taken notice. Common ſtones are to be ſeen only in places which have been repaired, or more recently conſtructed. Originally the maſon-work was compoſed of ſtony maſſes, conſiſting of a prodigious quantity of ſmall foſſile and ſparry ſhelly concretions, mixed, without any order, with a ſpecies of cement which binds the whole together, ſo that this ſubſtance, which is of the hardeſt conſiſtency, appears to be a compoſition, an aggregation of art, rather than a natural ſtone.

The ſolidity of the walls, the vaſt capaciouſneſs of the towers, which may be conſidered as ſo many forts, rendered the encloſure of the Arabs a rampart capable of making a ſtout reſiſtance. In defiance of the diſpoſitions and the efforts of the Mamelucs and their troops, a handful of Frenchmen, without cannon, and almoſt without ammunition, carried the place by eſcalade, in a few moments. Alexander had laid the foundations of a city, the memory of which has been perpetuated by it's

* Richard Pocock's Travels, vol. i. p. 493.

commerce,



Cleopatra's Needle. *Pompey's Column.*

Published by I. Stockdale.

commerce, by the cultivation of ſcience, and by prodigies of art: Buonaparte has reſcued the remains of that very city out of the hands of barbarians, whoſe preſence ſullied the ruins of it; he has reſtored it to the general commerce which it's poſition enſures, and which will recal it's ancient ſplendor. It is not eaſy to determine whether of theſe two heroes, the founder or the reſtorer, will excite moſt admiration in the eyes of poſterity.

Toward the eaſtern extremity of the crefcent, formed by the new bridge, and near the coaſt, are two obeliſks. It has been agreed to give them the name of *Cleopatra's needles*, though it is by no means certain that they were the work of that Egyptian queen. To her likewiſe have been aſcribed, without any one hiſtorical proof, the excavations which go by the name of *Cleopatra's baths*, and the conſtruction of the canal which ſtill conveys the waters of the Nile to the ciſterns of Alexandria: a piece of homage rendered to the great qualities of the laſt queen of the race of the Ptolemies. Thus, while the name of the men, who reared moſt of the aſtoniſhing edifices of ancient Egypt, is abſolutely unknown, poſterity carefully preſerves the memory of a woman, rendered illuſtrious by her magnificence, her genius, her heroic character, and her incomparable beauty; of the woman, whoſe charms triumphed over the greateſt of the Romans; of

the woman, finally, whom we can reproach only with the ſallies of a paſſion, not eaſily reſtrained in an ardent ſoul, and under a burning ſky, at which the graces diſdain not to ſmile, and which nature does not diſavow.

One of Cleopatra's needles is ſtill upright on it's baſe, the other is thrown down, and almoſt entirely buried in the ſand. The former ſhews what the hand of man can do againſt time; the latter, what time can do againſt the efforts of man. I had it not in my power to take their dimenſions; but an ancient French traveller, who ſeems to have meaſured them with extreme accuracy, aſſures us that their height is fifty-eight feet ſix inches, and the breadth of each face of their baſe ſeven feet.* They are each cut out of a ſingle block of granite, and charged on each ſide with hieroglyphical characters. The firſt figure of plate I. repreſents that one of the two needles which is ſtanding, viewed from the north. The impreſſion of the hieroglyphics was ſtill very diſtinct on the faces of this needle, and might be eaſily deciphered, except thoſe which look eaſtward, for theſe are entirely effaced.

Adjoining to thoſe obeliſks ſtood the palace of the Egyptian kings. Superb veſtiges are ſtill diſcernible of it's grandeur and magnificence. They are

* Travels of M. de Monconys, 1695, vol. i. p. 307.

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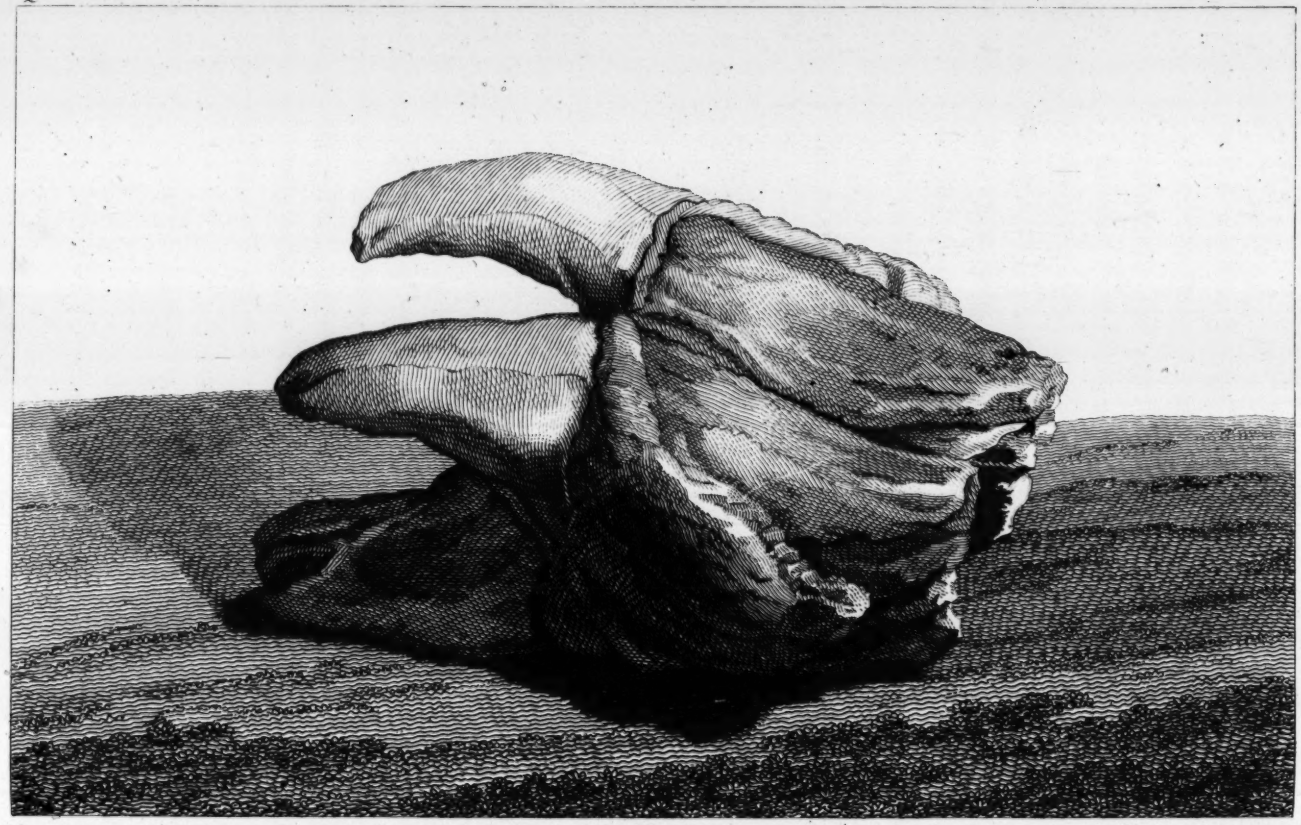


Fossil Tooth. Natural size.

an inexhauſtible quarry of pieces of granite and marble, which the Alexandrians of to-day are diſhonouring, by employing them in common with ordinary materials, in the conſtruction of their dwellings and other common edifices. Very ſuperficial digging in the ſite of this palace furniſhed, more abundantly than elſewhere, medals and engraved ſtones: they had become rarer, and indeed were hardly to be found at all, when I was at Alexandria. From thoſe ruins too was extracted the foſſile grinding tooth, repreſented in the ſize of nature, plate II. It paſſed for a human tooth, and conſequently that of a giant. But this opinion is inadmiſſible by every one who has the ſlighteſt knowledge of anatomy. On comparing this tooth with thoſe of known animals, there is complete conviction that it muſt have belonged to an elephant.

As you go out of the encloſure of the Arabs, by the gate of the ſouth, the eye is ſtruck with one of the moſt aſtoniſhing monuments which antiquity has tranſmitted to us. Proud of not having ſunk under the waſtes of time, nor under the more prompt and terrible attacks of ſuperſtitious ignorance, rears it's majeſtic head, the grandeſt column that ever exiſted. (See figure 2. of plate I.) It is of the moſt beautiful and the hardeſt granite, and is compoſed of three pieces, out of which have been cut the capital, the ſhaft and the pe-

deſtal. I had not the means of meaſuring it's height, and travellers who have gone before me are not perfectly agreed on this point. Savary aſſigns to it a height of a hundred and fourteen feet,* whereas Paul Lucas, who declares he had taken an accurate meaſurement of it, makes it's height no more than ninety-four feet.† This laſt opinion was generally adopted by the Europeans of Alexandria. The height of the column was admitted there to be from ninety-four to ninety-five feet of France. The pedeſtal is fifteen feet high; the ſhaft with the ſocle, ſeventy feet; finally, the capital, ten feet; in all, ninety-five feet. The mean diameter is ſeven feet nine inches. Admitting theſe proportions, the entire maſs of the column may be eſtimated at ſix thouſand cubic feet. It is well known that the cubic foot of red Egyptian granite weighs a hundred and eighty-five pounds. The weight of the whole column, therefore, is one million one hundred and ten thouſand pounds, eight ounces to the pound.

However hard the ſubſtance of the column may be, it has not eſcaped the corroding tooth of time. The bottom of the ſhaft is very much damaged on the eaſt ſide, and it is very eaſy to ſeparate, on the ſame ſide, thin lamina from the pedeſtal. It has

* Letters on Egypt, vol. i. p. 36.

† Journey of Paul Lucas, in 1714, vol. ii. p. 22.

been

been already remarked, that the hieroglyphics of Cleopatra's needle were corroded on the face expoſed to that point of the compaſs. It is moſt probably the effect of the wind blowing from the ſea. Some have pretended, that on the oppoſite face, that to the weſt, a Greek inſcription was diſcernible, when the ſun bore upon it: but with all the attention I could employ, it was not in my power to perceive any thing of it.

The ground on which the pillar is raiſed having given way, part of the pivot which ſupports it has been laid open. It is a block of ſix feet only in the ſquare: it bears the weight, as a centre, of a pedeſtal much larger than itſelf; which proves the exact perpendicularity of the whole. It too is granite, but of a ſpecies different from that of the column. The people of the country had built round the pivot, in the view of ſtrengthening the pedeſtal. This piece of maſonry, totally uſeleſs, was formed of ſtones of various qualities, among which fragments of marble, detached from the ruins of ſome antique edifice, and ſculptured with beautiful hieroglyphics, attracted notice. While ſome were exerting themſelves to prevent the falling of the monument, others, the Bedouins as I was told, endeavoured to bring it down, in the hope of finding treaſure under it's baſe when burſt to pieces. For this purpoſe they had employed the action of gunpowder;

powder; but very fortunately they had no great ſkill in the art of mining. The exploſion only carried away a portion of the maſon-work, ſo idly intended to be a prop to the pedeſtal.

Paul Lucas relates, that in 1714, a mountebank having got upon the capital with a facility which aſtoniſhed every body, declared it was hollow atop.* We have ſome years ago indications more poſitive on the ſubject. Some Engliſh ſailors contrived to get upon the ſummit of the column, by means of a paper-kite, which aſſiſted them in fixing a ladder of ropes: they found, as well as the man mentioned by Paul Lucas, a great round hollow in the middle of the capital, and moreover, a hole in each of the corners. It is therefore certain, that this chapiter ſerved as a baſe to ſome ſtatue, the fragments of which ſeem to be irrecoverably loſt. Some friends of M. Roboli, who had been French interpreter at Alexandria, have aſſured me that he had diſcovered near the column, pieces of a ſtatue which, to judge from the fragments, muſt have been of a prodigious magnitude; that he had them conveyed to the houſe occupied by the French, but that, notwithſtanding the moſt diligent reſearches, not being able to procure the other pieces of it, he had ordered the firſt to be thrown into the ſea, cloſe by that ſame houſe. They were ſhewn

* Journey of Paul Lucas, in 1714, vol. ii. p. 22.

to

to me, but it was impoſſible for me to diſtinguiſh any thing, for they are almoſt entirely buried under the ſand of the ſea. I was farther informed, that thoſe fragments of a ſtatue, were of the moſt beautiful porphyry.

We have nothing beyond conjecture, more or leſs ſupported by evidence, reſpecting the era, and the motives which dictated the conſtruction of the column of Alexandria. The name *Pompey's column*, by which it is generally deſigned, indicates the origin commonly aſcribed to it. Ceſar, we are told, ordered it to be erected, to perpetuate the memory of the victory which he had gained over Pompey, in the celebrated battle of Pharſalia. Relying on the teſtimony of an Arabian author, Savary pretends that it was a monument of the gratitude of the inhabitants of Alexandria to the Roman emperor, Alexander-Severus.* Finally, others aſcribe the elevation of the pillar to a king of Egypt, Ptolemeus-Euergetes.

Mr. W. Montague, whom his extenſive erudition and ſingular adventures have raiſed to celebrity, had formed, during his long reſidence in the eaſt, a new opinion on the ſame ſubject. He maintained that the column was the work of Adrian, another Roman emperor, who had travelled in

* Letters on Egypt, vol. i. p. 37.

Egypt. But he could adduce no proof in ſupport of this aſſertion: wiſhing, nevertheleſs, to give currency to his idea, he was under the neceſſity, in the view of perſuading others of the truth of what he had perſuaded himſelf, to employ a little ingenious fraud. I have the fact from a witneſs of undoubted veracity. The ſly Engliſhman had got one of his people to introduce a ſmall coin of the emperor Adrian, in a ſpot agreed on, between the ground on which this pillar reſts, and it's ſous-baſe. He afterwards repaired to the place, attended by a numerous company, and, after affected reſearches, he dextrouſly unearthed the coin with the blade of a knife, and oſtentatiouſly diſplayed it as an inconteſtable proof of the truth of his poſition. He ſent an account of the diſcovery to his own country, where it did not meet with much credit, and indeed hardly could, with perſons who knew the column. The Greeks, it is true, from the time of Adrian, had diffuſed over Egypt the principles of a beautiful architecture, and of elegance in all the arts. A judgment may be formed of this from the remains of the city which that very emperor had cauſed to be built in the upper part of that country, in honour of Antinöus, a young man celebrated in ancient hiſtory for his extraordinary beauty of perſon, and his generous devotedneſs to a Roman who has been more cried up than he deſerves. The columns which ſtill ſubſiſt at Antinöe are cut with greater delicacy,

delicacy, and have forms more elegant than that of Alexandria. Not that this laſt wants beauty; but it's principal merit conſiſts in the prodigious magnitude of it's dimenſions, and the truly aſtoniſhing enormity of it's maſs.

The ſame conſiderations which ſuggeſt a doubt reſpecting the aſcription of this pillar to the time of Adrian, apply ſtill more forcibly to that of the emperor Severus. Abulfeda, quoted by Savary, only ſays, "Alexandria poſſeſſes a renowned pharos, "and the column of Severus."* He adds not a word more, and does not ſo much as point out the ſpot where the column of Severus was reared. The city of Alexandria contained ſuch a number of columns, that it is impoſſible to aſcertain to which of them the paſſage of the Arabic hiſtorian is applicable. Alexander-Severus traced his pedigree up to Alexander the Great: it was natural for him to prize a city founded by the conqueror his anceſtor, and it is by no means wonderful, that he ſhould endeavour farther to embelliſh it by works of various deſcription, to ſupply the place of ſuch as had been thrown down or deſtroyed, with thoſe which had already rendered it ſo magnificent. On the other hand, on comparing the column dedicated to Severus, and ſtill exiſting in the ancient city of Antinöe, with that of Alexandria, we ſhall find it im-

* Deſcription of Egypt, Savary's tranſlation.

poſſible

poſſible to conclude that they are both of one and the ſame period. The hieroglyphics with which the granite-pivot, the immoveable ſupport of the column, is ſculptured, farther appear a new proof of the period of it's elevation, much more ancient than the reigns of Adrian and Severus, and they indicate a production of the moſt remote antiquity. This conſideration, united with the ſilence of hiſtorians on the ſubject, ſeem to throw back even to an era more diſtant than that of the defeat of Pompey, the conſtruction of the column which bears his name. If amidſt theſe uncertainties, which, in defiance of the reſearches of the learned, frequently involve the paſt and the future in the ſame obſcurity, I durſt venture to hazard an opinion of my own, I ſhould be tempted to aſcribe the honour of the erection of the column of Alexandria to the ancient times which produced ſo many prodigies in Egypt, to thoſe eras when myriads of men were employed, for years together, in tranſporting maſſes of ſtone, the movement of which ſeemed to exceed human ſtrength, and to demand the exertions of beings more than mortal.

Whatever be in this ſentiment, it would be difficult now to change the appellation ſo long affixed to the column of Alexandria, and, whatever good reaſons may be alleged to the contrary, it is very probable it will ſtill retain the name of *Pompey's*

pey's column. Nevertheleſs it is likewiſe probable, that poſterity will recollect that this column was the head quarters, from whence Buonaparte iſſued orders for the eſcalade and capture of Alexandria; that the bodies of the heroes who periſhed as the victims of their own bravery, are depoſited round the pedeſtal, and that their names are engraven upon it; it is likewiſe probable that, more ſtruck with the genius of the victory, and of the ſublime combinations connected with it, than with that which has conferred celebrity on ancient Egypt by her works of ſtupendous magnificence, abſorbed in the immortality of the French nation, ſhall be diſpoſed to fix the era of this dawning glory, and that to future ages the *column of Pompey* ſhall be the *column of the French Republic.*

I have heard it ſaid at Alexandria, that an idea was formerly entertained of tranſporting to France the column ſo much admired there. The Levantins and the navigators of Provence conſidered this enterprize as impracticable; they forgot, or perhaps they never knew that this very maſs of granite had been conveyed from the quarries of Syène, that is, more than two hundred leagues: they did not know that Caius Ceſar had tranſported from Egypt to Rome an obeliſk of a hundred cubits, or twenty-five fathoms, in height, and eight cubits, or two fathoms, in diameter; that Auguſtus intended

intended to put Rome likewiſe in poſſeſſion of the two obeliſks reared at Heliopolis by Seſoſtris, and which are each a hundred and twenty cubits high; that Conſtantine ordered the tranſportation of another obeliſk no leſs conſiderable, and in the conſtruction of which Ramaſes, king of Egypt, had employed two thouſand men; they did not know, finally, that within theſe few years, Peterſburgh has conveyed into her boſom, from a very conſiderable diſtance, a huge rock of three millions of pounds weight.

Grand enterprizes are the real monuments of the glory of great nations. It would be worthy of that nation which, in a few years, has ſurpaſſed in acts of heroic valour, all that the page of Roman hiſtory diſplays, to appropriate to herſelf the column of Alexandria. If extraordinary means are requiſite for this purpoſe, the genius of the ſciences, inſeparable from that of true glory, is there to deviſe them, and the arts, which likewiſe riſe with the people who cultivate them, will not fail in the execution. In the midſt of one of the ſquares of Paris, that of the *Revolution*, for example, the column could not fail to produce the moſt majeſtic effect. A coloſſal ſtatue might ſurmount its capital; this ſhould be the image of liberty: it would look down on the palaces of the depoſitaries of power, and by it's bold and impoſing attitude, would ſtrike terror into the heart

heart of whoever dared to abuſe authority, to oppreſs or betray a nation of men, of whoſe power it would be at the ſame time an eternal emblem.*

* Here the cloven foot is completely uncovered. A principle is avowed from which juſtice turns away her face, and at which humanity ſhudders. Gracious Heaven! What *right* has France to plunder Rome of her pictures and ſtatues, and Egypt of her columns? The right which our author himſelf, a little ago, execrated in the bittereſt terms; the right of the ſtronger to oppreſs the weaker, the right of the tyger to tear the lamb. Thus Paris is to be enriched and embelliſhed at the expenſe of all the nations of the globe, and the ſacred name of liberty is vilely proſtituted to abet democratic tyranny. *Ex uno diſce omnes.* It is the intereſt of all mankind ſurely, to reſiſt a principle ſo abominable, and to unite in cruſhing every attempt to reduce it to practice.—H. H.

CHAP. X.

Ruins—Canal of Alexandria—Ciſterns—Culture of the country adjacent to the canal—Salt-wort—Birds — Sparrows — Catacombs, Cameleons—Jackals.

IF on taking your departure from the pillar of Alexandria, you proceed ſouthward, you croſs an oblong gullet, ſpacious, and of conſiderable depth. It contains the relics of ancient buildings, among which are diſtinguiſhable, on a level with the ſand, thick and ſolid walls, diſpoſed in form of the letter T. Toward the extremity of the longitudinal branch of this T, there are two fragments of columns of granite, and at the very extremity, a ſubterraneous excavation, the entrance into which is now completely blocked up. The people of the country call this place *Guirgé*. Thence you arrive at the canal or kaliſh of Alexandria.

In the times of Alexander and of the kings of Egypt, Alexandria was not, as it now is, in the midſt of ſands: it was not encompaſſed with that zone of ſterility, which renders it's environs at preſent ſo diſagreeable. A lake, the Maréotis, which was at no great diſtance, and two wide canals, one of which deſcended from Upper Egypt, and the other

other iſſued from the branch of the Nile, to which the name of *Bolbotic* has been given, preſerved there a ſalutary coolneſs, at the ſame time that they favoured vegetation and agriculture. Theſe works, which atteſted the grandeur and the power of ancient Egypt, and the maintenance of which was equally called for by the real wants and the innocent pleaſures of human life, were ſtill kept up, under the domination of the caliphs. Abulfeda, an hiſtorian of Arabia, ſpeaks of Alexandria as a very great city, encompaſſed by ſuperb gardens.* The deſtruction of what had coſt ſo much pains and labour was reſerved for the Turks. Their ſpirit of devaſtation had dried up thoſe reſervoirs of water which, with their moiſture, diffuſed fertility, as it has quenched the ſources of knowledge, and of all mental energy in the people who have been ſo unfortunate as to be ſubjected to a deſpotiſm the moſt horrible.

Of theſe nothing now remains, and that too in a ſtate of degradation, but the canal of Lower Egypt; during the inundation it received the waters of the Nile at *Latf*, oppoſite to *Fouah*. It is paſſable by three bridges of modern conſtruction. Near the firſt, toward the ſea, is the entrance of the ſubterraneous conduit, which conveys the proviſion of water for the inhabitants of Alexandria into the

* Deſcription of Egypt.

ciſterns, the arches of which ſupported the whole extent of the ancient city, and which the whole world is agreed in conſidering as one of the moſt beautiful monuments on the face of the globe.* The mouth of this aqueduct was walled up, but when the water of the canal had attained, by the ſwelling of the river, a certain height, the chiefs of the city went in great ceremony to break down the dike. When the ciſterns were filled, it was built up again, and the waters in the canal continued to flow into the ſea at the old harbour. It was by means of a communication ſo eaſy, that, in former times, the tranſportation of merchandize was conducted all over Egypt. The dangerous paſſage of the mouths of the Nile, and the hazards of the ſea were thereby avoided. When I was at Alexandria, in 1788, it was not much under a hundred years ſince it had been navigable by boats; but this canal, whoſe benefits are ineſtimable, was neglected by barbarians indifferent to their real intereſts. The walls which ſupported it's borders were going to ruin every day; the pavement of the bottom was covered with ſucceſſive layers of mud; there was no longer water ſufficient to float a boat; a yellowiſh and ill-taſted water could hardly force it's way ſo far as to the ciſterns, which were themſelves half deſtroyed; the inhabitants were, of courſe, in danger of a total failure of that neceſſary fluid, and

* It was not in my power to ſee them.

modern

modern Alexandria would have diſappeared in the ſand, leaving only a reſort for ferocious animals, which ſeemed already to threaten it, as they roamed round and round it's walls.

The brink of the canal is animated by ſome of the rich productions of living nature: at a greater diſtance ſhe appears dead; nothing is to be ſeen on all ſides but ſands, rocks, and ſterility. Trees and ſhrubbery grow by the water's ſide, and ſome ſpots of verdure extend to the vicinity. Small ramifications of water carry fecundity into the plains, in which they ſow barley, and cultivate a variety of leguminous plants, particularly artichokes in abundance. The culture of this diſtrict once extended much farther: it would have been eaſy for the modern Alexandrians to puſh it ſtill farther; but they had no activity, except for committing robbery; and it is not a matter of ſurprize that people who were at no pains to preſerve the only water that they could drink, ſhould not employ themſelves in procuring the other neceſſaries and comforts of life.

Such are the veſtiges of the agriculture with which ancient Alexandria was ſurrounded; the remains of thoſe ſuperb gardens which contributed to it's magnificence, and the deliciouſneſs of which Abulfeda cried up, down even to the times of the

Arabs. In truth, a few trees ſcattered up and down, and ſcarcely vegetating on that ſandy diſtrict, are far from being ſufficient to veil it's aridity and ruggedneſs: ſeveral ſpecies of ſalt-wort, acrid and ſaline plants, whoſe Arabic name *kali* has been given to alkaline ſubſtances, are nearly the only ſort which poſſeſs the property of thriving on thoſe coaſts, and even there they rather creep than riſe. The Alexandrians burn them, and derive from their aſhes a fixed ſalt, which is an object of commerce.

The verdure, the coolneſs, and the ſhade, had attracted to the banks of the canal a multitude of ſmall birds. It was in the month of October: I could diſtinguiſh the fig-pecker,* the common lark,† and ſparrows. Bird-catchers employ themſelves in taking the two firſt ſpecies, and in thereby deſtroying the only beings which could confer on their habitations ſome appearance of gaiety. But theſe birds, the ſparrows excepted, were merely birds of paſſage at Alexandria: they reſted themſelves from the fatigue of a long voyage near the waters of the canal: theſe were haſtening to a

* Bec figue. Buffon, Hiſt. Nat. des Oiſ. & pl. enlum. No. 668. fig. 1. *Motacilla ficedula.* Lin.

† L'alouette. Buffon, Hiſt. Nat. des Oiſ. & pl. enlum. No. 363, fig. 1. *Alauda arvenſis.* Lin.

ſtate

ſtate which was to preſent to them nothing but a bed of mud; they were already ſtagnant, and of a brackiſh taſte, and the birds which had the good fortune to eſcape the ſnares laid for them on all ſides, when they arrived, prepared to ſeek toward the Delta, a land more fortunate, a ſituation more cheerful, and retreats more tranquil.

The ſparrows, on the contrary, more habituated to the ſociety of man, becauſe their fleſh leſs delicate provokes not his appetite, do not migrate; except in ſome excurſions, in queſt of more ample means of ſubſiſtence, they leave not inhabited places, and make them likewiſe their own reſidence. They are domeſticated birds, forming round us a voluntary aviary of impudent paraſites, who partake, whether we will or not, both of our food and of our habitation; they have, in Egypt, the ſame character which we know them to poſſeſs in Europe, the ſame familiarity, the ſame effrontery, the ſame voraciouſneſs. They are there likewiſe the uninvited gueſts of the Alexandrians; they are to be ſeen in all the inhabited diſtricts of Egypt; they are in like manner diffuſed over Nubia, and even over Abyſſinia. Exceſſive heat, therefore, does not diſagree with them; at the ſame time they are not to be found along the weſtern coaſt of Africa; from cape Blanc, or near about it, they are replaced

by the bengalis,* the ſenegalis,† and the little ſparrows of the Senegal.‡ Not being able, after what I have juſt now ſaid, to aſcribe the cauſe of this fact to the exceſſive heat, I think I can account for it from the difference of the alimentary plants uſed in thoſe parts of Africa. Wheat and it's kindred grains are cultivated in Egypt, in Nubia, in Abyſſinia, juſt as on the Barbary coaſt; they ceaſe to be ſo toward the vicinity of cape Blanc; other nutritive plants ſupply their place to the negroes which inhabit to the ſouth of that promontory; and the grains of thoſe plants are no longer a food ſuitable to ſparrows; ſo that if they do not frequent all the corn-bearing countries, it is at leaſt certain that they never fix a reſidence in thoſe where that ſpecies of grain and it's kindred plants are not cultivated.

The rapid glance which we have juſt taken of ſome of the productions of animated nature, refreſhed the imagination, fatigued with hovering over fragments and rubbiſh. Thanks be to the mother of all beings. Eternal praiſes be aſcribed

* The bengali, Buffon, Hiſt. Nat. des Oiſ. & pl. enlum. No. 115, fig. 1. *Fringilla bengalus.* Lin.

† The ſenegali, Buffon, Hiſt. Nat. des Oiſ. & pl. enlum. No. 157, fig. 1. and the ſtriped ſenegali, *ibid.* & pl. enlum. No. 157, fig. 2. *Fringilla ſenegala.* Lin.

‡ Buffon, Hiſt. Nat. des Oiſ. & pl. enlum. No. 280, fig. 2.

to

to her unchangeable beneficence! It was her will to preſerve on a parched and red-coloured ſoil, and amidſt the horrors of deſtruction, a point in which ſhe knew, in defiance of the efforts of barbarians who diſcerned her not, how to make ſome articles of her beautiful dreſs to appear in ſhining colours. It is with regret that the feet withdraw, that the eyes turn aſide from a ſpot which compariſon renders ſo enchanting. My pen exerts itſelf to communicate to the reader the delightful ſenſations there excited in my own boſom. But we muſt haſten to reach a country on which Nature has laviſhed her treaſures. That thought revives my courage; for we have ſtill to wade through ſands, and muſt firſt plunge into the gloomy manſions of the dead, into the catacombs.

They are at a ſhort diſtance from the canal: they are galleries, lengthening a prodigious way under ground, or rather into the rock. They have, in all probability, been at firſt the quarries which furniſhed ſtones for the conſtruction of the edifices of Alexandria, and, after having ſupplied the men of that country with the materials of their habitations, while they lived, are themſelves become their laſt abode after death. Though vaſt, they did not require very painful labour, the layer of ſtone being ſoft and calcareous; it is as white as that of Malta, and like it, the conſiſtence is increaſed by the impreſſion

preſſion of the air. But the rock of Malta is bare, whereas that of Egypt is, for the moſt part, covered with the ſands. It is undoubtedly on account of the want of hardneſs in the rock, that the ancient Egyptians had plaſtered over the interior of the galleries with a kind of mortar, which has acquired a wonderful ſolidity, and which it is very difficult to break. Moſt of thoſe ſubterraneous alleys are in a ruinous ſtate. In the ſmall number of thoſe into which it was ſtill poſſible to penetrate, you might ſee on both ſides three rows of coffins piled on each other: they are not, as at Malta, cut lengthwiſe, but tranſverſely: their greater ſides are on an inclined plan inwardly, ſo that the bottom of the coffin is much narrower than the upper part. At the extremity of ſome of thoſe galleries there are ſeparate apartments with their coffins, and reſerved, no doubt, for the ſepulture of particular families, or of a peculiar order of citizens.

If the Arabs are to be believed, the catacombs have a ſubterranean communication with the pyramids of Memphis. Such an opinion of their immenſe extent has an appearance of exaggeration: it is not, at the ſame time, beyond the other gigantic labours of the Egyptians, and the fact well deſerves to be aſcertained. It is more certain that they extend as far as the ſea, at the bottom of the old harbour; at leaſt the three grottoes or cavities

cut

cut out in the rock on the coaſt, and which Europeans have decorated, improperly enough, with the name of *Cleopatra's Baths*, ſeem to be a continuation of them.

At the entrance of the catacombs I have ſeen ſeveral cameleons.* It is now well known, that the changing of their colours is not to be aſcribed to the objects preſented to them; that their different affections increaſe or diminiſh the intenſity of the tints, with which the very delicate ſkin which covers them is, as it were, marbled: that they are not ſatisfied with nouriſhment ſo unſubſtantial as air; that they require more ſolid aliment, and ſwallow flies and other inſects; and that, finally, the marvellous ſtories which have been told reſpecting this ſpecies of lizard, are merely a tiſſue of fictions, which have diſgraced the ſcience of nature down to this day. I have preſerved ſome cameleons, not that I was tempted to repeat the experiment of Cornelius le Bruyn, who, after having gravely aſſured us, that the cameleons which he kept in his apartment, at Smyrna, lived on air, adds, that they died one after another, in a very ſhort ſpace of time,† but I wiſhed to ſatisfy myſelf to what a point they could ſubſiſt without food. I

* Cameleons. Lacepede, Natural Hiſtory of oviparous quadrupeds.—*Lacerta chamæleon.* Lin.

† Voyage to the Levant, vol. i. p. 515.

had

had employed every precaution to prevent entirely their having any, without ceasing to be exposed to the open air. They lived thus for twenty days: but what kind of life! From being plump, as they were when I caught them, they soon became extremely thin. With their good plight, they gradually lost their agility and their colours; the skin became livid and wrinkled, it adhered close to the bone, so that they had the appearance of being dried before they ceased to exist.

The catacombs likewise frequently serve as a retreat for the jackals, which swarm in this part of Egypt: they always march in numerous squadrons, and roam around the habitation of man. Their cries occasion much disturbance, especially in the night time; it is a sort of yelping which may be compared to the shrill complainings of children of different ages. They greedily devour cadaverous substances and the garbage on laystalls; in a word, cruel as voracious, they are an object of apprehension even to man.

It is of the jackal that we are to understand all that authors have said of the wolf, and even of the fox of Africa; for, admitting that these animals have, to a certain degree, a relation to each other, it is however well known, that there are neither wolves nor foxes in that part of the world. The name given

given to the jackal in Egypt is *deib:* the *fellahs*, or the peaſantry of the country, likewiſe call them, after ſome popular legend no doubt, *abou Soliman*, Soliman's father.

Theſe ferocious animals are not afraid of advancing cloſe up to Alexandria; they traverſe it's encloſure during the night; they frequently ſpring over it by the breaches made in the wall; they enter into the city itſelf in queſt of their prey, and fill it with their cries: a ſpecies of aſſociation worthy of the men by whom it was inhabited.

But an animal more gentle, and at the ſame time more extraordinary, which occupies ſubterraneous apartments in the vicinity of Alexandria, is the gerboiſe or jerbo.

CHAP. XI.

Natural hiſtory of the jerbo of Egypt, with remarks on natural hiſtory in general, and a note reſpecting a plan of travelling into the interior of Africa.

WHAT the Reader is now going to peruſe has been already publiſhed, a great part of it at leaſt, in the Journal of Phyſics of the month of November, 1789. I at that time determined to lay before the public my obſervations on the jerbo, becauſe Buffon, not having been able to procure a ſingle individual of this genus of quadrupeds, nor accurate information reſpecting their manner of life, has deſcribed it from very defective information. The work of Mr. Bruce, who has preceded me in the publication of his travels, as he had likewiſe preceded me in the expedition itſelf, had not yet appeared at the period when my memoir was printed. That illuſtrious traveller has confirmed what I had ſaid on the ſubject of the jerbo, and he has enabled me to rectify a miſtake in nomenclature into which I was led, and Buffon before me, on the authority of one of his compatriots, Dr. Shaw, by a falſe application of name. But however intereſting the notes reſpecting the jerbo may be, which are introduced into Mr. Bruce's travels, mine,

mine, beſide the merit of priority in point of time, contain more facts, and preſent a hiſtory more complete, of thoſe ſingular animals; this is at leaſt the idea entertained of them, at the time, by the learned world; I ſatisfy myſelf with quoting the authors of the Encyclopedic Journal. In the account which they gave of the fifth volume of *Travels in Nubia and Abyſſinia*, by Mr. James Bruce, and after having tranſcribed his chapter on the jerbo, they add: "The ancients had deſcribed this animal. Hero-" dotus, Theophraſtus, and the Arabs, make men-" tion of the jerbo; but among the moderns, no " naturaliſt has deſcribed it better than M. Son-" nini, &c. who has travelled ſeveral years to pro-" mote the progreſs of natural hiſtory." The compilers of that publication afterwards give an extract from my obſervations.*

The memoir, which I printed in 1787, will here, therefore, naturally find a place, and the rather, that it will now appear accompanied with additions highly intereſting to natural hiſtory.

Since the time that the eloquent compoſitions of Buffon have given a powerful impulſion to the ſcience of nature, which he has had the ſkill to render ſo attractive and ſo amiable, varieties have been

* Encyclopedic Journal for the month of September, A. D. 1792.

diſcovered

diſcovered in the family of the jerbo. But the firſt reſult which I have obtained from an attentive examination, and accurate deſcriptions of ſeveral of thoſe animals, has aſcertained to me, that there exiſted but one variety of them in Egypt, where they are multiplied without end. In fact, among all thoſe which I have obſerved at different times and in different places, I never remarked the leaſt diſſimilitude of either form or colour.

For the facility of pronunciation, I ſhall diſtinguiſh this gerboiſe of Egypt, by the name of *jerbo*, under which Buffon has given a deſcription of it,* though it's real name, it's Arabic name, be *jerboa*. It is a miſtake in Haſſelquitz, which Bruce has likewiſe corrected,† to ſay that the Arabs call it *garbuka*.‡

That travellers, unacquainted with natural hiſtory, and conſequently without taſte for obſerva-

* Natural Hiſtory of Quadrupeds, art. Gerboiſe.—*Lepus caudâ elongatâ*, Lin. Syſt. Nat. edit. 9. *Mus jaculus*, ibid. edit. 12. *Dipus jaculus*, ibid. edit. 13.—*Mus jaculus pedibus poſticis longiſſimis, caudâ extremi villeſâ.* Haſſelquitz, Travels in Paleſtine, vol. ii. p. 6, and Mem. of the Acad. of Upſal, 1750, p. 17. —*Gerbo.* Cornelius le Bruyn's Travels, p. 406. — *Gerboiſe* Paul Lucas, Travels, vol. ii. p. 73.—*Jerboa*, Shaw's Voyage, p. 248.—The two-footed mouſe of the mountains, called by the Arabians *jerbo*, Michaëlis, queſt. 92, &c. &c.

† Travels in Nubia and Abyſſinia, vol. v. 151.

‡ Haſſelquitz, in the place above quoted.

tions

tions of this kind, ſhould, at firſt ſight, and without farther examination, have impoſed falſe denominations on foreign animals, from ſome apparent relation, whether in reſpect of form or mode of living, with known animals, is not a matter of ſurprize: their manner of viewing objects was ſuperficial and vulgar, the reſults had the ſame defects. But there is good reaſon to be ſurprized, that naturaliſts by profeſſion, that Haſſelquitz, for example, the pupil of an illuſtrious maſter, ſhould have fallen into the ſame errors. He is ſo much the leſs excuſable, that he did not fix on the denomination to be appropriated, till after a long and even minute examination. But he had, like his maſter Linnæus, the mania of referring to the ſame genus, beings which nature had ſeparated. This union of objects, frequently very remote from each other in the true ſyſtem of nature, was founded merely on certain approximations in the exterior forms: approximations iſolated, vague, taken by chance, and ſo deſtitute of foundation, that they might be given up, and were in fact given up, to aſſume others equally precarious, by means of which, the ſame animal changed place or genus, at the pleaſure of the nomenclator.*

After having examined each form in particular, to catch and to compare their combination, above

* See the proof of this in the nomenclature introduced in the firſt note, bottom of the preceding page.

all to ſtudy the manners, the modes of life, to bring to the obſervation of nature neither prejudice, nor the ſpirit of ſyſtem; to ſee things as they are, and not as we would have them to be, ſuch is the character of the real naturaliſt, whereas that of the vocabulary-compiler is to confound every thing. The jerbo furniſhes us with an example of this confuſion in the ſcience of nature; certain reſemblances, each taken ſeparately, has ſuggeſted compariſons between it and the hare, the rabbit, the rat, the field-mouſe, &c. though they ſo evidently differ from each other, that any man without the ſlighteſt knowledge of natural hiſtory, provided he poſſeſſed a ſound underſtanding, would readily diſtinguiſh them. Nevertheleſs theſe very improper denominations of *hare*, *rabbit*, *rat*, *field-mouſe*, &c. have been indiſcriminately applied to the jerbo, by naturaliſts and ill-informed travellers; and it is worthy of remark, that erudition without genius, ſometimes produces the ſame effects that ignorance does.

It is in the burning climates of Africa, principally, that nature ſeems to have taken pleaſure in varying, in a manner altogether ſingular, the forms of the beings which ſhe has placed there, and in deviating from the rules and the proportions which ſhe ſeemed to have adopted, if, however, that can be called a deviation, which is a proof of her boundleſs and inexhauſtible fecundity. On that fiery ſoil it

it is we find the giraffe or cameleopard, remarkable for the diſproportionate height of his fore-legs.* We likewiſe find an extreme diſproportion between the legs of the jerbo; but the hinder legs are, in this animal, exceſſively long, whereas the fore ſcarcely appear. Theſe long limbs, or, to expreſs myſelf with greater preciſion, theſe long feet, for it is the tarſus which is ſo immoderately lengthened, are of uſe to the jerbo only in his progreſſive movement: thoſe before, which may be conſidered as little hands, are uſeleſs to him in removing from place to place. He hops after the manner of birds; and this kind of motion, which would be very conſtraining to every other quadruped, is ſo much adapted to him, that his running, or rather his leaping, is very nimble and very ſpeedy. He then is an animal which, with four feet, ſeems to be withdrawing from the claſs of quadrupeds, to aſſume ſomewhat of the impreſs of that of birds. Placed on the firſt ſtep of the paſſage from the one to the other, he conſtitutes the firſt degradation of quadrupeds, and commences the progreſſion from theſe to birds. The celebrated man who has carried the torch of philoſophy into the ſanctuary of nature, was the firſt to eſtabliſh this ſublime and important truth: that the workmanſhip of nature had not been interſected by wide intervals, nor by ſudden

* Giraffe. Buffon, Nat. Hiſt. Quadrupeds.—*Cancleopardalis giraffa.* Lin.

breaks; that all her productions were mutually connected; that the tranſition from claſs to claſs, from genus to genus, from ſpecies to ſpecies, was conducted by gradual ſhades of difference; and that thoſe claſſes, thoſe genera, thoſe ſpecies were, in the eyes of the philoſopher, only ſo many ſigns calculated to relieve the mind, ſo many diviſions to aſſiſt the memory.

Though the tranſition from quadrupeds to birds has not been hitherto diſtinctly traced, though all the points of it be not yet aſcertained, we are not the leſs warranted to conſider this union as exiſting: we have the commencement of it in the jerbo, and the laſt gradation in the bat. There is all the reaſon in the world to believe, that the ſeries of ſucceſſive ſhades will unfold itſelf in proportion as good obſervers ſhall devote themſelves to travelling, in countries not yet diſcloſed to natural hiſtory. I am convinced that the interior of Africa, a region to this day virgin in reſpect of diſcovery, contains a multitude of new and valuable objects, the knowledge of which would diffuſe light inconceivable on all the parts of general phyſics. May I be permitted, in this place, to communicate the deſign which I had formed, ſome years ago, of penetrating into thoſe regions which, till now, have been deemed inacceſſible. My intention was to range the whole length of the continent of Africa, through it's

it's middle, from the hardly known gulf of Sidra, to the Cape of Good Hope. I claim the honour of having conceived this project, which ſcares the imagination, and of having felt myſelf poſſeſſed of courage to put it in execution, had government deigned to ſecond my views. I ſhall return, afterwards, to unfold the plan which I had traced, and which, had it been followed out, would have enſured to France the glory of an enterprize till then unattempted, and which other nations ſeem deſirous to take out of her hand. But I proceed to the deſcription of the jerbo.

His ſize is nearly that of a large rat: the head is broad, large in proportion to the body, flattened a-top, and of a clear pale red with a blackiſh ſhade; the upper jaw projecting beyond the lower; both the one and the other furniſhed with two inciſive teeth only; thoſe above broad, cut in right angles, flat and divided lengthwiſe, by a groove paſſing through the middle; finally, thoſe of the under jaw longer, convex externally, pointed at their extremity, and bent back inwardly. It is evident that theſe teeth are, or not far from it, diſpoſed and formed as thoſe of the hare, of the rat, and of the field-mouſe, and this reſemblance has procured all theſe names to the jerbo. It would have been juſt as reaſonable to take him for a beaver, or for a por-

cupine, which are equally deſtitute of canine teeth, and have only four inciſives. The ſnout is ſhort, broad, and obtuſe; a number of ſtiff hairs extend from ſide to ſide, and form long whiſkers. The noſe is naked, white and cartilaginous: the eyes, large and prominent, have the iris brown; the ears are long, large, and covered with hair ſo ſhort, that unleſs you look at it cloſe, you would ſuppoſe them naked. Externally, they are white in the lower part, and gray through the reſt of their length: their inſide, as well as the ſides of the head, is of a very clear pale red, with a mixture of gray and blackiſh; they entirely ſurround, for about a third of their length, the auditory paſſage, ſo that they repreſent exactly the upper part of a paper cornet. This conformation muſt increaſe, in animals, the faculty of hearing, and, above all, guard the interior of the organ againſt extraneous ſubſtances which might otherwiſe find admiſſion.

The body is longiſh, broader behind than before, and well clothed with hair, long, ſoft and ſilky. That which covers the upper part and the ſides of the body is aſh-coloured almoſt the whole length through, and of a clear pale red toward the point which is blackiſh: but as the aſhy part is not apparent, it may be ſaid that the fleecy coat is a clear pale red, and variegated with blackiſh lines running

ning zig-zag. Theſe tints, ſomewhat dark, contraſt agreeably with the beautiful ſhining white of the under part of the body.

The fore-feet are ſo ſhort that they ſcarcely project beyond the hair; they are white and have five toes, the greateſt of which, or interior toe, is very ſhort, rounded at the extremity, and has no nail. The other four, the ſecond whereof outward is the longeſt, are of conſiderable length, and armed with great hooked nails. The heel is very much raiſed, and the inſide, or ſole of the foot, is naked and fleſh-coloured. I have already remarked that they might be taken for hands; in truth they are of no ſervice to the jerbo for walking, but only for laying hold of his food and carrying it to his mouth, and alſo for digging his hole.

The hinder legs are clothed with long hair of a faint red and white; the long feet are almoſt entirely naked, eſpecially on the outſide; which muſt of neceſſity be the caſe, as the animal, whether in motion or at reſt, is continually ſupported on this part of the body. Thoſe feet, ſo exceſſively lengthened out, have three toes; that in the middle is ſomewhat greater than the other two; they are all furniſhed with ſhort nails, but broad and obtuſe; they have beſides on the heel a ſpecies of ſpur, or rather a very ſmall rudiment of a fourth toe, which

conſtitutes a point of reſemblance between the jerbo of Egypt and the *alagtaga of Tartary*, deſcribed by Gmelin,* and which has probably eſcaped Haſſelquitz, as well as many others. Moreover the toes and the heel are furniſhed, on the under ſide, with long hair, all of gray tinged with yellow, excepting thoſe which cover the root of the toes, and whoſe colour is blackiſh. The nails both before and behind, are of a dingy white.

According to Haſſelquitz, in the paſſage above referred to, the tail of the jerbo is three times longer than the body; I never found it, however, longer than a little above one-half more. It's circumference is not much greater than that of a large gooſe-quill; but it is quadrangular, and not round; it is gray-coloured, deeper on the upper than on the under ſide, and covered with a ſleek hair down to it's extremity, which terminates in a tuft of long ſilky hair, half black, half gray.

On comparing this deſcription with that which Gmelin has given of the *alagtaga*, in the new commentaries of the academy of Peterſburgh (vol. v.) it will appear, that the jerbo has a ſtrong reſemblance to it; they have both the ſame number of toes on the fore feet, the ſpur on the hinder, the ſame length of tail, &c. which is a proof of two

* *Nov. Comment Acad. Petropol.* tom. v. art. 7.

things;

things: firſt, that the jerbo and the alagtaga are one and the ſame animal; ſecondly, that the deſcriptions which have been given of the jerbo are not very accurate. What chiefly ſuggeſted doubts to Buffon's mind, reſpecting the identity of the jerbo and the alagtaga, was the diſparity of the climates which each inhabited, the former being reſident in Africa, and the alagtaga being found in the cold regions of Siberia. But this is not the only inſtance which might be adduced to the ſame effect. Many ſpecies of animals are ſcattered over the icy countries of the north, and over the ſultry diſtricts of the ſouth. Rats take pleaſure to reſide in very hot climates, and they live very comfortably in the north of Sweden. Hares inhabit with equal convenience the burning ſands of Africa, and the ſnows of Lapland, of Siberia, of Greenland, &c. &c,

It is likewiſe certain that the gerboiſe of Cyrenaïs, or the deſert of Barca, deſcribed by Mr. Bruce, in vol. v. of his Travels in Nubia and Abyſſinia, is only a variety in the tribe of the jerbo. The ſlight differences remarked not being, by far, ſufficient to conſtitute two diſtinct ſpecies. To the reſearches of Mr. Bruce we are farther indebted for the exact knowledge of another animal, which had very improperly been confounded with the jerbo, and to which he has given the name of *daman-iſraël*, or

lamb

lamb of Iſraël. So far from having the ſingular and very diſtinctive character of the jerbo, namely, the exceſſive length of the hinder legs, this *daman* has all his legs equal, or nearly ſo, and he has no tail, whereas that of the jerbo is very long. Dr. Shaw* was the firſt who fell into the miſtake of confounding two animals ſo very unlike; and this error was ſucceſſively copied, till Mr. Bruce detected it, whoſe obſervations have thrown much light on a ſubject formerly involved in doubt and darkneſs. By taking the jerbo for the daman-iſraël, the ſame which the Hebrews called *ſchafan*, all that Arabian authors have ſaid of the ſecond has been aſcribed to the firſt. In truth, on reading the philological diſſertations which have been compoſed on the ſubject, and after the jerbo was well known, a man was embarraſſed in attempting to diſcover in that quadruped, the mode of living, the inſtinctive ſagacity, the profound wiſdom, which the writers of the eaſt have ſo much cried up, and which Solomon celebrates in his Proverbs.† Thus, it is aſcertained, that whatever has been written by the Hebrews or the Arabians, on the ſubject of the ſuperior qualities of a ſpecies of animals which dig

* Travels through Barbary.

† *Quatuor ſunt minima terræ, & ipſa ſunt ſapientiora ſapientibus.* .....*Lepuſculus*; it is thus that the Vulgate tranſlates the word, but the *ſchafan* is the animal deſcribed: *Plebs invalida, quæ collocat in petrâ cubile ſuum.* Proverbs xxx. 24. 26.

their

their common habitation in a body, in certain parts of the eaſt, is to be underſtood of the daman, and not of the jerbo: with this addition, nevertheleſs, that a naturaliſt might reaſonably expect ſome allowance ſhould be made for certain exaggerations in the oriental ſtyle.

I preſent a table of the principal dimenſions of the jerbo. It is the mean term of meaſurements taken of ſeveral ſubjects, and theſe females, becauſe females firſt fell in my way. The difference of magnitude between the ſexes is beſides very inconſiderable.

	Inches.	Lines.
Length of the body, from the tip of the noſe to the root of the tail —	5	6
Length of the head, taken in a ſtraight line, from the tip of the noſe to the nape — — — —	1	8
Breadth of the ſnout at it's extremity	0	4
Breadth of the aperture of the mouth, taken from one corner of the jaw to the other — — —	0	3½
Projection of the upper jaw beyond the under — — —	0	3¼
Length of the upper teeth — —	0	2
Length of the under teeth — —	0	3
Diſtance between the two noſtrils —	0	1

Diſtance

	Inches.	Lines.
Diſtance between the tip of the noſe and the anterior angle of the eye	0	10
Diſtance between the poſterior angle of the eye and the ear — —	0	2½
Diſtance between the two angles of the eye — — — —	0	5
Diſtance between the anterior angles of the eyes, taken in a ſtraight line	1	0½
Length of the ears — — —	1	6
Breadth of the ears, at the baſe — —	0	5
Diſtance between the ears — —	0	9
Length of the tail — — —	8	6
Thickneſs of the tail at it's root — —	0	2
Total length of the fore-legs — —	1	7
Length of the great toe — —	0	1½
Length of the ſecond toe meaſured with the nail — — — —	0	3
Total length of the hinder legs —	6	2
Length of the middle toe meaſured with the nail — — —	0	10
Length of the ſpur — — —	0	1

The female has eight teats, the poſition of which is remarkable; they are ſituated more outwardly than thoſe of other quadrupeds. The firſt pair is beyond the joint of the ſhoulder, and the laſt is rather under the thigh than under the belly. The other two pairs, being on the ſame line, are thus placed rather on the ſides than under the body.

The

The male is modelled on a ſcale ſomewhat ſmaller than the female, but the difference is very trifling. The tints of their fleece are likewiſe, in general, not quite ſo deep. The teſticles do not appear outwardly. The penis, in it's ordinary ſtate, is itſelf concealed in a very thick ſheath: when erected, it is fifteen lines long, and two and a half round, at the root. The aperture of the gland is formed by two cartilaginous rings; the prepuce has, in it's upper part, two little hooks, likewiſe cartilaginous, white, and three lines long, which, bending forward, come to terminate nearly on the brim of the prepuce itſelf. Theſe hooks, pretty thick at their inſertion, terminate in a point ſurmounted by a ſmall yellow button, reſembling the antheræ of certain flowers. The whole of the prepuce is garniſhed, beſides, with very ſmall white points, cartilaginous, and bent backwards toward the root of the penis. From this ſingular conformation of the parts, there is reaſon to believe that the copulation of the jerbos muſt, like that of cats, be accompanied with moments of pain, or even that the gland, once inſerted into the female organ, cannot be for ſome time extracted, as is the caſe with the canine ſpecies.

With a mighty apparatus, relative to the ſmall ſize of the jerbo, for the buſineſs of propagation, it is preſumable, that their amorous affections are ardent.

dent. It appears that they are equally prolific; for they are very numerous in Arabia, in Syria, in Egypt, and in Barbary. In the north, probably, theſe faculties are enfeebled; nay, I preſume to conjecture they are lulled to ſleep there, during the moſt rigorous part of the ſeaſon, and that, for this reaſon, they do not multiply ſo faſt as in more ſouthern climates.

During my reſidence, or, to ſpeak more properly, during my rambles in Egypt, I diſſected ſome jerbos; but as time is almoſt always wanting, in travels of this kind, I ſatisfied myſelf with examining, whether the interior of thoſe animals, ſo ſingular as to their external forms, preſented any thing extraordinary. My principal object was to aſcertain more particularly, that they had but a ſingle ſtomach, and that, of conſequence, they had not the faculty of ruminating. This would have been a reply to one of the queſtions which Michaëlis, profeſſor at Gottinguen, had addreſſed to the travellers diſpatched into the eaſt, by the king of Denmark; namely, "Is the jerbo a ruminating "animal?"* A queſtion always originating in the ſame miſtake, that of confounding the jerbo with the daman-iſraël, or the ſchaſan of the Hebrews. Some ſubjects, preſerved in brandy, were deſtined

* The intelligent and curious Travellers, or Inſtructive Tablets, vol. ii. p. 321.

as a ſupplement, in the ſequel, to what I had not been able to deſcribe. But a long immerſion in the fluid, and frequent tranſportation from place to place, had affected the viſcera, to ſuch a degree, that they were almoſt equally livid, mollified, and macerated. The ſubject in higheſt preſervation, preſented to me the following details:

On being taken out of the brandy, this jerbo weighed four ounces ſix grains. As it was very much impregnated with the fluid, it's real weight could be, at moſt, four ounces.

At the aperture of the abdomen, the brandy filled the cavity of it: the altered viſcera had loſt their natural colour.

The ſtomach was not perceptible.

The ſmall inteſtines preſented, on the firſt ſight, only confuſed lineaments, ſo ſunk were they; the greater were ſomewhat more diſtinct: the colon formed in the right ſide two ſpiral windings apparent outwardly, the rectum deſcended almoſt in a ſtraight line to the left.

Finally, the bladder, quite compreſſed, ſhewed itſelf in the under part.

The

The ſtomach was ſituated almoſt altogether to the left, very much ſunk and concealed by the liver. I wiſhed, to no purpoſe, to examine the dimenſions and the forms of the ſtomach and of the inteſtinal canal: on the ſlighteſt attempt to raiſe thoſe parts, or to remove them from each other, they ſeparated, and preſented only formleſs fragments. The caſe was the ſame as to the meſentery, the veſſels, &c. &c.

The liver was compoſed of three lobes and one lobule. Two lobes were exterior, the one right, the other left, contiguous and ſeparated only by a deep ſciſſure, in which paſſed a little of the cellular texture, a veſtige of the ſuſpenſory ligament. The poſterior lobe was entirely ſituated to the left; in other reſpects, thoſe three lobes preſented to me neither ſemicircular inciſion nor appendice; but under the right lobe, in the poſterior part, I found an irregular lobule, to which adhered ſome of the cellular texture, that ſeemed to be the veſicle of the gall. I ſay *ſeemed*, for here, as frequently in other caſes, the bad condition of the membranous parts very much macerated, rendered it impoſſible to diſtinguiſh the firſt forms of them. The ſtructure of the liver it was more eaſy to aſcertain; at the ſame time it's parenchyma was not the leſs ſeparable from it by a ſlight preſſure.

The

The right kidney was in a ſtate of tolerable preſervation: it's figure was oval, convex above, flattened below: it was five lines and a half in length, and three in breadth. On the upper ſide, in the membranous fragments, I diſtinguiſhed a very ſmall gland, oval, and ſomewhat hard.

The left kidney was not in ſuch a good ſtate of preſervation as the right; it appeared ſomewhat more conſiderable. The bladder was very muſculous, flattened, oval, and narrower at bottom; it was in very good preſervation, and was five lines long and two broad in the upper part.

The jerbo is commonly found in Lower Egypt, principally in the *Bahiré*, or weſtern part. The denomination of *rats*, or *mice of the mountain*, has been improperly applied to them; for all the lower part of Egypt is a plain. Haſſelquitz, in the paſſages already quoted, alleges, that theſe denominations have been invented by the French. This is not the only occaſion on which this traveller has fallen into error, from an inclination to ſpeak ſlightingly of our nation. The ſmall number of Frenchmen trading to Egypt, do not know what *rat of the mountain* means; the literati of other nations are the perſons chargeable with transforming the jerbo into a rat.*

* See the nomenclature at the beginning of this chapter.

The ſands and rubbiſh which ſurround modern Alexandria, are very much frequented by the jerbo. They live there in troops, and with their nails and teeth dig a habitation for themſelves in the ground. I have been told that they can penetrate even through the ſoftiſh ſtone which is under the layer of ſand. Without being actually wild, they are exceedingly reſtleſs: the ſlighteſt noiſe, or any new object whatever, makes them retire to their holes with the utmoſt precipitation. It is impoſſible to kill them, but by taking them by ſurprize. The Arabs have the art of catching them alive, by ſtopping up the outlets of the different galleries belonging to the colony, one excepted, through which they force them out. I never ate any of them, but their fleſh does not paſs for a great delicacy; the people of Egypt, however, do not reject it. Their ſkin, which is ſoft and ſhining, is uſed as a common fur.

I fed for ſome time, while I was in Egypt, ſix of thoſe animals in a large cage of iron wire. The very firſt night they had entirely gnawed aſunder the upright and croſs ſticks of their priſon; and I was under the neceſſity of having the inſide of the cage lined with tin. They lived on wheat, rice, nuts, and every ſpecies of fruit. They were very fond of baſking in the ſun: the moment you put them in the ſhade, they clung cloſe to each other,

and

and ſeemed to ſuffer from the privation of warmth. We have been told that the jerbo ſlept by day, and never in the night-time; for my own part, I have obſerved preciſely the contrary. In a ſtate of liberty, you meet them in broad-day-light, gathering round their ſubterraneous habitations, and thoſe which I fed under my own eye never were more lively, nor more awake than when expoſed to the full blaze of the ſun. Though they have much agility in their movements, gentleneſs and tranquillity ſeem to form their character. Mine ſuffered themſelves to be ſtroked with great compoſure; there was among themſelves no noiſe, no quarrelling, even when food was ſcattered among them. Beſides they diſcovered no ſymptom of joy, of fear, or of gratitude. Their gentleneſs was by no means amiable, it was not intereſting; it appeared to be the effect of a cold and complete indifference, approaching to ſtupidity. Three of thoſe jerbos died one after another, before I left Alexandria; I loſt two more on a rough paſſage to the iſland of Rhodes, where the laſt, through the negligence of the perſon who had the charge of him, got out of his cage, and diſappeared. When the veſſel was unloaded, I had diligent ſearch made for him, but all to no purpoſe; he had undoubtedly been devoured by the cats.

It ſeemed difficult to preſerve thoſe little animals in a ſtate of captivity, and ſtill more ſo to tranſport them into our climates. It is of importance, beſides, to advertiſe thoſe who may be diſpoſed to import them into Europe, of the precautions which it is indiſpenſably neceſſary to employ in keeping them while on ſhip-board: they are the ſame with thoſe uſed in bringing over the *agouti*,* the *acouchi*,† and the other quadrupeds with gnawing teeth, of America. They muſt be kept cloſely ſhut up in cages or in caſks, without a poſſibility of their eſcaping; their natural diſpoſition inciting them to devour every thing, they might occaſion very conſiderable damage to a ſhip in the courſe of a voyage: and, being capable of eating through the hardeſt wood, might endanger her ſinking.

I had ſcarcely publiſhed my obſervations on the gerboiſe of Egypt, in 1787, when there appeared on that ſubject, in the Journal of Natural Hiſtory,‡ a letter of M. Berthout-van-Berchem. That learned gentleman charges me with two miſtakes, gratuitouſly enough, as in the two conteſted points, I

* Buffon, Hiſt. Nat. des Animaux Quadrupèdes.—*Cavia aguti.* Lin.

† Id. Supplem. to the Hiſt. of Quad.—*Cavia acuſchy.* Lin.

‡ By Meſſrs. Bertholon and Boyer. A. D. 1788, No. 12.

have

have truth upon my ſide; I had prepared my anſwer, but citizen Lamethric, to whom I propoſed the inſertion of it in the *Journal de Phyſique*, as compoſing a ſequel to my obſervations, remarked to me, that having refuſed to publiſh M. Berthout's critique, it would have had an aukward appearance to let my reply appear in it. I give it in this place, and as I employ, in diſculpation of my pretended miſtakes, only the words and the quotations of M. Van-Berchem himſelf, I begin with tranſcribing his letter. This little diſcuſſion, moreover, will not be wholly uſeleſs: it will furniſh new elucidations on the natural hiſtory of the gerboiſe, at the ſame time that it will ſhew how far criticiſm, when it lays ſtreſs on minutiæ, runs the riſk of miſleading.

Letter on the true nomenclature of the gerboiſe; by M. Berthout-van-Berchem the younger, perpetual Secretary to the Society of Phyſics, at Lauſanne.

" In a work on quadrupeds which I have juſt " publiſhed, will be found a detailed hiſtory of the " gerboiſe. I ſatisfy myſelf at preſent with giving " the true nomenclature of that animal, which " proves that the *alagtaga* and the *gerboa* are two " different ſpecies, that M. Sonnini has committed " an error in claſſing them together (*Journal de*

" *Phyſique*, November 1787, by M. de Lamethrie), " though his memoir contains, in other reſpects, " ſome very intereſting remarks on thoſe animals.

" It is to M. Pallas that we are indebted for the " beſt natural hiſtory of the gerboiſe. But as it " would be tedious to tranſcribe here the exami- " nation which he has made of the nomenclature " of thoſe animals, I muſt refer the reader to his " book;* and will ſay, after him, that there are " two ſpecies of gerboiſe. The firſt, of which M. " Buffon ſpeaks under the name of *alagtaga*, and " which ought to be written *aluk-daaga*, has five " toes on the hinder feet; the ſecond has only " three, and differs from it likewiſe in ſeveral other " characters. In order to diſtinguiſh this firſt ſpe- " cies, which M. Pallas denominates *mus jaculus*, " I ſhall call it *jalma*, from the name given to it by " the Calmucs, and ſhall preſerve to the ſecond ſpe- " cies the name of *gerbo*, or *gerboa*. M. Pallas has " obſerved three varieties in the *jalma*, which ap- " pear to differ principally in the ſize. The moſt " common, which is of a middling ſize between " the other two, is the *jalma*, or *alak-daaga*. It is " often found in eaſtern Tartary, in the deſerts " of Siberia, and in the regions beyond the Baïkal.† " It is likewiſe found in Syria, nay even ſo far off

* *Nova ſpecies quadrupedum. Mus jaculus*, p. 275.

† Ibid. p. 285.

" as

"as India. M. Pennant ſays it is to be found in "Barbary;* but there is no authentic evidence "that the jalma is an inhabitant of Africa: he even "remarks that it prefers colder countries than what "ſuit the gerboa, an inhabitant of warm climates.†

"The ſecond variety is the largeſt of all; it is "more rare than the firſt: they give it the name of "*marine jalma*, and it is to be found in the graſſy "hills of the Tanaïs, of the Volga, of the Rhymnus, "and of the Irtis.‡ It is to this variety we are to "refer the animal which Dr. Shaw has erroneouſly "deſcribed under the name of *daman-iſraël*, and "which is of the ſize of the rabbit.

"The third variety is found, with the large one, "toward ſalt meridional marſhes of the Caſpian "ſea, and with the middle ſized one, in the vicinity "of the Volga, and of the Rhymnus. They give "it the name of *chein-jalma*;|| it is the ſmalleſt "of the three. The largeſt, or *marine jalma*, is of "the ſize of a ſquirrel; the middle-ſized, or *jalma*, "is about as big as a rat, and the ſmalleſt is ſcarcely "ſo large as a field-mouſe.

"All theſe families have five toes on the hinder "foot; and in the great number which M. Pallas

* Hiſtory of Quadrupeds, p. 429. † Pallas, book already quoted, p. 286. ‡ Id. ibid. p. 284. || Id. p. 291.

" examined, he never ſaw a ſingle variation as to " the number of toes. But what has led Meſſrs. " Buffon and Sonnini into an error, is the faulty " deſcription given by Gmelin, who never ſaw any " but a ſingle individual, probably disfigured, and " which preſented to him only three toes and a " ſpur, or four toes.* He is likewiſe miſtaken with " reſpect to the manners of this animal, in aſcribing " to it thoſe of the *lepus ogotona:* an error which " has been ſince copied by the younger Gmelin. " Meſſer-Chmidt, who had left a good deſcription " of this animal, does not pretend to ſay that it had " only four toes.† It muſt be admitted then that " this ſpecies is entirely diſtinct from the follow- " ing, which has only three toes on the hinder foot.

" The gerbo, of which M. Buffon has given us " a very good deſcription, after M. Allamand,‡ and " which M. Pallas calls *mus ſagitta*,‖ and M. Pen- " nant *Egyptius gerboa*,§ is found in Aſia, between " the Tanaïs and the Volga, where M. Pallas fre- " quently ſaw it, and in the ſandy hills to the ſouth " of the Irtis, as well as in the ſchiſtes of the altaï- " que mountains. In general, it inhabits countries " more meridional, and digs it's hole in ſandy and " ſoft ground, not inhabited by the jalma. It is

* Pallas, book already quoted, p. 282. † Id. p. 282.
‡ Buffon, Supplem, vol. vi. p. 292. ‖ Pallas, above, p. 306.
§ Hiſt. of Quadr. p. 427.

" well

"well known that this animal likewiſe lives in "Egypt, Barbary, Paleſtine, and the deſerts be- "tween Baſſora and Aleppo.

"I ſhall only indulge myſelf in one remark more "on an aſſertion of M. Sonnini, that the gerbo "was never more lively and alert than when ex- "poſed to the full blaze of the meridian ſun. This "is a very ſingular affirmation, for M. Klokner, "who was in poſſeſſion of ſome of thoſe animals, "declares poſitively that they ſleep in the day- "time, and are afraid of the light (Buffon, Supp. "vol. vi. p. 264.). I have likewiſe ſeen at Lau- "ſanne, in the collection of M. Doyat, four or "five gerboiſes, which he brought with him from "Arabia, and which kept themſelves concealed and "at reſt in the day-time; finally, M. Pallas ſays, "in poſitive terms, of the *mus jaculus: Protracti in "lucem diù, vix pedibus inſiſtunt, quaſi ſtupidi vel "ebrii, mutique, nec aures facilè vitali vigore eri- "gunt, vixque ad ſaltandum excitari poſſunt, car- "cere calidiore forſan lentiores redditi.** M. Pallas "adds, that thoſe animals grow benumbed in win-

* Pallas, the work already quoted, p. 288. When expoſed to the light for any conſiderable time, they become incapable almoſt to ſtand, as if they were ſtupefied or drunk, and, ſtruck dumb, they want animal vigour ſufficient ſo much as to prick up their ears, nor can any ſtimulus excite them to dance about, being perhaps rendered ſluggiſh by the increaſed heat of their priſon.

"ter.

"ter. I finiſh this letter with obſerving, that not "only M. Pallas, but likewiſe Meſſrs. Pennant, "Zimmerman, and all good zoölogiſts are of the "ſame opinion on the ſubject. I have the honour "to be, &c."

Lanazle, June 1ſt, 1788.

Sonnini's reply to M. Berthout-van-Berchem, &c.

Permit me, Sir, to addreſs this note to you, relative to my memoir on the ſubject of the gerboiſe of Egypt, in the ſame journal in which it has been publiſhed.* This memoir ſeems to have been the ſole object of your letter, and this conſideration, the attention which you have paid to it, and the handſome terms in which you have mentioned it, would be reaſons ſufficiently powerful to induce me to make an attempt to efface certain blemiſhes which you think are perceptible in it. As the reſearches of naturaliſts ought to have a tendency toward one and the ſame centre, toward a common focus, truth, to deviate from that object in whatever manner it may be, is to commit a *crime*. In this view, nothing can be more juſt, nor at the ſame time more noble, than to acknowledge and diſ-

* I mentioned before the reaſon which prevented the inſertion of my reply in the *Journal de Phyſique*.

avow

avow error, againſt which no man ſtands ſecure. This is the track which Buffon conſtantly purſued; this is the great, the manly example he has left to all who write on natural hiſtory, and which I would be zealous to imitate, were I not convinced, that claſſing together the alagtaga and the gerbo, as two animals of the ſame ſpecies, I am not only free from the blame which you impute to me, but that not even the ſlighteſt miſtake can reaſonably be laid to my charge. In fact, Sir, you will pleaſe to remark, firſt of all, that, in my memoir, it was no part of my intention to compoſe the nomenclature of the gerboiſe race. I employed myſelf as little as I poſſibly could in that dry, unacceptable, and too frequently uſeleſs labour. My deſign ſimply was to ſpeak of the gerboiſes which I have ſeen in Egypt, and to repreſent them exactly as they fell under my obſervation. In deſcribing the jerbo, the only race of this genus to be found in that part of Africa, I was ſtruck with it's reſemblance to another animal of the ſame genus, a native of northern countries, and which Gmelin has deſcribed under the name of *alagtaga*; and I have ſaid: *the jerbo and the alagtaga of Gmelin, appear to me one and the ſame animal*; though I felt ſome difficulty in becoming the proſelyte of this approximation, on account of the extreme oppoſition of climates. Nay, I acknowledge that, if reflection had not ſuggeſted to me other ſpecies of quadrupeds, living equally in cold

cold regions, and under a burning ſky, I ſhould have been extremely diffident in aſſigning a decided identity to two animals, the deſcriptions of which, nevertheleſs, preſented me with numerous and unequivocal conformities.

Buffon, who never had an opportunity of obſerving the jerbo, and who had not ſeen, any more than myſelf, the alagtaga, except in Gmelin's deſcription, had preſumed that theſe two quadrupeds were of the ſame ſpecies. I, who have examined the jerbo very cloſely, was enabled to expreſs myſelf in a more poſitive manner. But neither Buffon nor I have advanced that the gerboiſes of *eaſtern Tartary, of the deſerts of Siberia, and of the regions beyond the Baïkal* were all ſimilar to that of which Gmelin has ſpoken, nor even that this laſt exiſted in thoſe countries. We have only admitted the teſtimony of a man of gravity, whoſe remarks are depoſited in the collection of the imperial Academy of Peterſburgh, and this teſtimony, it muſt be admitted, is ſtill far from being deſtroyed.

I ſhall confine myſelf, Sir, to your own quotations. It is certain that when M. Pallas, whoſe celebrity is moſt honourably acquired, communicates his particular obſervations, not the ſhadow of doubt can be raiſed againſt them. We muſt, accordingly, conſider as inconteſtable that, in the northern

northern countries which I have juſt named, there are gerboiſes, called *alak-daaga*, which differ from the *alagtaga* of Gmelin, as they have five toes on the hinder foot. M. Pallas adds that, common in the north, they are nevertheleſs *ſcattered over Syria, and even as far as to India*, countries in which lives equally the jerbo, that is the gerboiſe with three toes, with a ſpur or rudiment of the fourth toe, the alagtaga of Gmelin. The Britiſh Pliny, Mr. Pennant, aſſerts that they are met with likewiſe in Barbary, and I can ſee no good reaſon why M. Pallas ſhould call this laſt fact in queſtion, on the remark that they *prefer colder countries than the gerboa likes, who is the inhabitant of warm climates*; as if ſeveral diſtricts of Syria were not as hot as Barbary, at leaſt as the parts into which the obſervers have penetrated.

Here then we have two races cloſely allied, in other reſpects, that of the *alak-daaga* and of the jerbo, which exiſt together to the ſouth, though the latter be more numerous there than the former. Is it not probable that both the one and the other may be found in like manner to the north, where the jerbo will, in his turn, be much ſcarcer? This conjecture becomes more probable, or rather it ceaſes to be one, when we read in your letter, Sir, that the intelligent naturaliſt, M. Pallas, *has frequently ſeen the jerbo in Aſia, between the Tanaïs and the*

the Volga, and in the ſandy hills to the ſouth of the Irtis, as well as in the ſchiſtes of the altaïque mountains, that is in the north of Ruſſia, in Tartary, and in Siberia.

After this, it is aſſuredly very poſſible, as you rightly obſerve, Sir, that Gmelin may have fallen in with only a ſingle individual of the race of the jerbos, always becoming ſcarcer and ſcarcer as you advance northward, and that he ſhould have given it the name of *alagtaga*, or, if you will have it ſo, of *alak-daaga*, under which the people of thoſe countries, not much accuſtomed to employ themſelves in reckoning the number of the toes of animals, and in taking their dimenſions, comprehend the whole generation of gerboiſe. But it is not credible that a well-informed traveller, and accurate with reſpect to other objects of much greater importance, ſhould not have poſſeſſed the ſkill to diſtinguiſh an animal mutilated to ſuch a degree as to be deficient in ſome of it's members, and of curtailed dimenſions, as you are pleaſed to ſuppoſe. It is ſtill more difficult to believe that he ſhould have amuſed himſelf with deſcribing a creature of the imagination, and that, by a chance ſtill more inconceivable, this creature of pure invention, ſhould really exiſt in other climates widely remote and totally oppoſite.

Gmelin

Gmelin has not then committed a miſtake, in deſcribing what he ſaw, and which, conformably to the more modern obſervations which you, Sir, produce, he muſt have ſeen in the countries which he traverſed. On the other hand, it is inconſiſtent with good logick to impute error to him, when all that can be alleged againſt him amounts to one or two negative proofs, which are totally inſufficient to annihilate one ſingle poſitive proof. It has appeared to me, for ſome years paſt, that travellers and naturaliſts indulged themſelves rather too lightly in contradicting their predeceſſors. This is not the place to examine whether ſcience has gained much from this general tone of criticiſm; but it has induced me to inſiſt on M. Gmelin's juſtification, independent of it's connection with my own. In truth, on the ſuppoſition that this obſerver had carried impoſition ſo far as to paint a quadruped, the forms of which were not ſuch as he had aſcribed to it, we ſhould not be the leſs warranted to affirm that the jerbo of Egypt has a very ſtriking reſemblance to another gerboiſe deſcribed in the commentaries of the Academy of Peterſburgh, under the denomination of *alagtaga*; this is all I pretended to ſay, without preſuming to pronounce reſpecting it's reality, any more than reſpecting the degree of confidence to be granted to the traveller who had deſcribed it.

The

The opinion which affirms that the jerbo and the alagtaga of Gmelin are but one ſingle and the ſame ſpecies, has been adopted by the judicious M. Allamand, one of the foreign naturaliſts on whom Buffon ſet the higheſt value. In giving his details relative to a gerboiſe ſent from Tunis to M. Klokner, and after having ſaid that it was of the ſame race with the jerbo of Buffon, the Dutch profeſſor adds: *It* (the jerbo) *forms a genus apart, and that a very ſingular one, with the alagtaga, of which M. Gmelin has given us the deſcription and the figure, but which approaches ſo nearly to our jerbo, that it is impoſſible not to conſider it, with M. de Buffon, as a variety of the ſame ſpecies.** On the other hand, Buffon, who, in deſcribing at firſt the jerbo after Edwards and Haſſelquitz, had made only one ſpecies of it with the alagtaga of Gmelin,† has perſiſted (that is his expreſſion) in not ſeparating them in his ſupplement to the natural hiſtory of four-footed animals, and no one, Sir, is better qualified than yourſelf to appreciate the weight of the opinion of the French naturaliſt, when, not diſdaining to dart the glance of genius on a diſcuſſion rather of words than of facts, and after having weighed the more recent authorities to which you yourſelf appeal, he finds himſelf confirmed in his firſt ſentiment.

* Buffon, Suppl. to Nat. Hiſt. of Quadrup. Add. of the Dutch Editor (M. Allamand) art. Gerboiſe or Jerbo.

† Nat. Hiſt. of Quadrupeds, art. Gerboiſes.

As

As to your ſecond remark on my aſſertion, that *the jerbos were never more lively and alert than when they were expoſed to the full blaze of the ſun*, a fact which to you appears *extremely ſingular*, you muſt permit me, Sir, to obſerve in my turn, that my propoſition, ſuch as I ſtated it, did not pretend to deſcribe jerbos in general, nor thoſe which live in perfect liberty, but only certain individuals which I kept confined in a cage. The expreſſion I made uſe of rendered it impoſſible to miſunderſtand my meaning, for my words preciſely are: *thoſe which I fed never were more lively and alert, &c.* It is not matter of much ſurprize that animals which, left to themſelves, find a habitation, and paſs the greateſt part of their life in holes dug out of an inflamed ſand, and a burning layer of chalk, ſhould ſuffer from the privation of heat, on finding themſelves expoſed to the impreſſions of the open air, to the winds, to the coolneſs of the night ſeaſon; and this reaſon alone would be ſufficient to account for the different character of mine, ſhut up as they were for the moſt part in the ſhade, and recovering new life and motion from the genial influence of the rays of the ſun.

I was not ignorant that the gerboiſe, ſent from Tunis to Mr. Klokner, ſlept during the whole day, and awoke at the approach of night;* but what

* Suppl. to the Hiſt. of Quadr. by Buffon; Art. of the add. of profeſſ. Allamand.

inference can be deduced from the habits of a little ſolated and very delicate animal, when, forced away from the heat of it's natal ſoil, it finds itſelf tranſported into a climate cold and humid, like that of Holland? This reflection applies with equal force to thoſe which M. Doyat preſerved alive at Lauſanne. I have likewiſe, in favour of my opinion, teſtimony not liable to ſuſpicion; in the firſt place, that of my own eyes, which are ſufficiently good to merit ſome confidence; next, that of many Europeans who ſaw my jerbos at Alexandria; and, finally, that of the crew of the polacre, *the Fortune*, on board of which thoſe jerbos were for a whole month.

But I have extended my propoſition, I acknowledge, and have advanced that jerbos were to be met with in the day time in the vicinity of their ſubterraneous habitations, which ſuppoſes that they are not continually lulled to ſleep. Could the Arabs interpoſe between you and me, they would aſſure you, Sir, that they ſhoot the jerbos with their fowling-pieces the moment they iſſue from their holes. But an undeniable teſtimony, becauſe it proceeds from a *good zoölogiſt* and an illuſtrious traveller, is that of Mr. Bruce. He relates that, in an unfortunate journey through the part of Africa, formerly known by the name of Cyrenaïs or Pentapolis, and where the jerbo is more common than elſewhere, he employed his attendants, and the Arabs

Arabs who accompanied him, in killing them with ſticks, to prevent any injury being done to their ſkins.* A little farther on he adds, that the Arabs of the kingdom of Tripoli, who hunt the antelope, find much amuſement in teaching their greyhounds to turn ſuddenly on the jerbo; that a beautiful little greyhound, preſented to him by the prince of Tunis, frequently afforded him the pleaſure of this kind of hunting; that the chaſe laſted long, and that he has ſeveral times ſeen, in a large court well encloſed, the greyhound a full quarter of an hour on the purſuit before he could ſeize his nimble prey.† All theſe circumſtances, aſſuredly, ſufficiently demonſtrate that the jerbos are not indiſturbable ſleepers in the day time.

The paſſage from M. Pallas, *protracti in lucem*, &c. which you quote at full length, to run down my aſſertion, makes not the leaſt againſt it, and this remark will no more eſcape *good zoölogiſts* than all men of good ſenſe, as, in this paſſage, the animal in queſtion is of a ſpecies and country different from the *mus jaculus* of M. Pallas, that is to ſay, of the alak-daaga, or gerboiſe of the north, which you have taken too much pains to diſtinguiſh from the jerbo, to admit of their ever being henceforward

* Travels in Nubia and Abyſſinia, by James Bruce, Eſq. vol. v. p. 149.

† Id. ibid. vol. v. p. 151.

confounded with each other. Recollect, Sir, on the contrary, that M. Pallas has frequently ſeen his *mus ſagitta*, the jerbo, *in the ſandy hills*, &c. Now, I ſhould be glad to know, how it was poſſible frequently to ſee animals that ſleep all day long, in ſubterraneous galleries?

Beſides, I never meant to aſſert that the jerbo did not ſleep at all in the day, and did not keep awake at all in the night. My ſole intention was to limit the too general aſſertion of thoſe who lulled him aſleep all day long, and kept him awake the whole night through. I am even ſtrongly diſpoſed to believe that his ſleep is longer and leſs interrupted, when the ſun is above the horizon, than when he has left it. This is a relation which the jerbo would have with many other quadrupeds which ſeek for the means of ſubſiſtence, and engage in their running and hunting parties, rather in the ſhade than by the light of day. It is unneceſſary to produce inſtances of this; they are abundantly well known.

More than enough, undoubtedly, has been ſaid, in the diſcuſſion of a queſtion not of ſuperior importance. In attempting to keep the gerbo awake, it is far from being impoſſible that we may have ſet the reader aſleep. I ſhall therefore ſubjoin only a ſingle word: I had preſumed that the gerboiſe fell into

into a ſtate of numbedneſs and ſtupefaction in the north, during the moſt rigorous part of the ſeaſon, and that accordingly propagation muſt go on much more ſlowly than in meridional countries. You have ſatisfied me, Sir, that M. Pallas completely verifies my conjecture, which flatters me beyond conception. I am not the leſs diſpoſed, on this account, publicly to expreſs my reſpect for you.

CHAP. XII.

French factory—Statue—Adanſon and his misfortunes—Auguſtus, another French interpreter—Antique tomb—The name of Alexander ſtill reſpected in Egypt—Venetians and Engliſh—Commerce—Germes—Fiſhes.

WHILE at Alexandria, I lodged in the houſe occupied by the French conſul and the merchants of that nation: it is cloſe upon the ſea, at the bottom of the new harbour. It forms a ſquare, the ſides of which encloſe a large court, and around it, under arcades, a ſeries of warehouſes. The arcades are ſupported by columns, or to expreſs myſelf more accurately, by the fragments of columns pilfered from the rubbiſh of the ancient city: ſeveral of them are of granite, and one of porphyry.

There was likewiſe in this court, a ſtatue, of the ſize of nature, in white ſtone, and repreſenting a woman ſitting, with a child ſtanding by her ſide. It is a tolerable piece of ſculpture; the drapery, in particular, has a great deal of merit. Some Arabs had found this ſtatue buried in ruins, and ſold it to a French interpreter, who intended to have it

tranſported

tranſported to his own country. But he died before he had an opportunity of executing his deſign; and from that time to the preſent, the ſtatue has remained in a ſtate of expoſure to the ſhocks of bales of merchandize, which are inceſſantly moved about in the court, and which had even mutilated it, without exciting any concern either to preſerve it, or to convey it to it's place of deſtination, where aſſuredly it would have met with a cordial reception. The genius of deſtruction muſt have domineered with unbounded ſway over regions beſtrewed with the diſmal effects of her power, ſeeing it had forced a paſſage into the encloſure dedicated to the uſe of a civilized nation.

The lodging apartments are over the warehouſes; the caſements are of conſequence very lofty, and a ſingle gate, of great ſolidity, ſhuts in this vaſt range of building. They farther ſtrengthen it, on tumultuous emergencies, by bales piled a-top of each other. If the commotion did not ſubſide, and there was ground of apprehenſion that the populace would break in, all the inhabitants of the factory ſlid down from the windows in the night time, and fled for refuge on board of ſome veſſel.

In former times there was only a vice-conſul at the head of this eſtabliſhment; but M. Tott, in the courſe of his inſpection, had recalled the conſul

from Cairo, where it was impoſſible to protect him from the inſults and perſecution of the Mamelucs, and fixed him at Alexandria. It is eaſy to judge that here he was not much more ſecure. The French flag waved on the terrace of the factory; it would have been better, perhaps, not to diſplay it at all, as it was impoſſible to procure reſpect for it from thoſe barbarians.

Among the few Frenchmen who reſided there, and whoſe generous and obliging character can never be obliterated from my memory, I muſt diſtinguiſh a name dear to the ſciences, that of Adanſon. The brother of the academician of Paris, devoted, from his youth up, to the ſtudy of the oriental languages, had for a long time fulfilled the delicate functions of an interpreter in the Levant. He had undergone, in Syria, one of thoſe cruel inflictions, which are equally the reproach of the government which orders them, and of that which ſuffers them to paſs unrevenged. The victim of his duty, he was likewiſe ſo of the deteſtable barbarity of a Pacha. Enjoined, in concert with his colleague, and in the name of the French nation, to preſent well-founded remonſtrances, they were both doomed, by order of the ferocious Muſſulman, to the horrid puniſhment of the baſtinado on the ſoles of the feet. The other interpreter expired under the hands of the executioner, and

Adanſon,

Adanſon, ſtill more unfortunate perhaps, his feet mangled and exquiſitely painful, almoſt entirely deprived of the power of walking, ſurvived his execrable chaſtiſement, and the affront offered to France, which her government left unpuniſhed as well as that of the aſſaſſination of her conſul at Alexandria.

A cataſtrophe ſo terrible would have been alone ſufficient to awaken the livelieſt intereſt in favour of M. Adanſon, had he not been, in other reſpects, highly eſtimable, for his talents and extenſive illumination. But the rewarding of modeſt and diſtant merit did not enter into the detail of miniſterial arrangements. Their gilded folding-doors ſcarcely ever opened, except to gaudy embroidery or importunate inſignificance. The man who poſſeſſed talents only lived, for the moſt part, iſolated, unnoticed, unrewarded, if, however, this ſtate of ſequeſtration were not a retinue more brilliant and more honourable than that of unjuſt and undiſtinguiſhing power. Adanſon vegetated at Alexandria, and there partook of the functions of interpreter with M. Auguſtus, whoſe wit and amenity of diſpoſition were almoſt a phenomenon in that country, and which would have raiſed him to honourable diſtinction in every country in the world. Had I only to expreſs my ſatisfaction in having received certain

certain formal civilities, I ſhould have diſpenſed with making particular mention of theſe two interpreters, without knowing whether they are ſtill within reach of hearing this expreſſion of my gratitude; but to them, and to their illuminated complaiſance, I ſtand indebted for the facility with which I was enabled to make my obſervations in countries of no eaſy acceſs; and travellers will feelingly perceive the value of ſuch encounters; for they know, as I do, how rare they are.

I had heard mention made of a curious monument, a kind of antique tomb, depoſited in a moſque without the precincts of Alexandria; to no purpoſe did I expreſs a deſire to ſee it; I was aſſured that the attempt would be dangerous, and withal impracticable. The French conſul and M. Adanſon earneſtly entreated me not to think of it. M. Auguſtus, however, leſs timid, engaged to conduct me thither by ſtealth, and without the privity of other Frenchmen. A janizary of the factory accompanied us: the ſcheick of the moſque, *iman* as called by the Turks, *curé* by the Chriſtians, was waiting for us, and we were permitted to examine every thing tolerably at our leiſure, in conſideration of a certain douceur agreed upon between M. Auguſtus and the prieſt. This temple is very ancient; it was reared by one of the Caliphs; the walls

walls are incruſted with marbles of various colours, and there are ſtill to be ſeen ſome beautiful remains of moſaïc-work.

The tomb, the object of our curioſity, and which may be conſidered as one of the moſt beautiful morſels of antiquity preſerved in Egypt, had been transformed, by the Mahometans, into a kind of little pool, a reſervoir conſecrated to contain the water for their pious ablutions. It is very large, and would form an oblong rectangle, were not one of the ſhorter ſides rounded in ſhape of a bathing-tub. It was probably, of old time, covered with a lid: but no traces of it are now viſible, and the laver is entirely open. It is all of a ſingle piece, and of a ſuperb marble ſpotted green, yellow, reddiſh, &c. on a ground of a beautiful black; but what renders it peculiarly intereſting, is the prodigious quantity of ſmall hieroglyphical characters with which it is impreſſed both inſide and outwardly. A month would ſcarcely be ſufficient to copy them faithfully: we have not hitherto, of courſe, had exact drawings of them. That which I ſaw, on my return from Egypt, in the poſſeſſion of the miniſter Berthin, at Paris, could only ſerve to convey an idea of the form of the monument, the hieroglyphics having been traced purely from imagination, and as chance directed. It is nearly the ſame thing as if, in trying to copy an inſcription,

tion, one ſhould content himſelf with writing down the letters, without order and without connection. Nevertheleſs, it is only by copying, with ſcrupulous accuracy, the figures of this ſymbolical language, that we can attain the knowledge of a myſterious compoſition, on which depends that of the hiſtory of a country once ſo celebrated. When that language ſhall be underſtood, we may perhaps learn the origin of the ſarcophagus, and the hiſtory of the puiſſant man whoſe ſpoils it contained. Till then it is but the vague and flitting field of conjecture.

By the ſide of the coffin, on a piece of gray marble, of which the pavement of the moſque is compoſed, I perceived a Greek inſcription, but in Roman characters; as they were in a great meaſure obliterated, it muſt have required more time than we could ſpare to decipher them. All I was able to diſtinguiſh, at the firſt glance, was the word CONSTANTINON.

It was formerly impoſſible to procure admiſſion into this moſque, and this accounts for the ſilence of travellers on the ſubject of the ſepulchre which renders it ſo intereſting. A duke of Braganza was the firſt European who viſited it, or rather who diſcovered it, for chance merely led to the diſcovery. He happened to be paſſing by the temple; the gate was open; he perceived no one within

ſight,

fight, and had the curioſity to ſtep in. Some children who had obſerved him, flocked together and ſurrounded him with loud outcries. Had they been heard, it would have proved fatal to the Portugueſe prince; he pulled out his purſe and ſilenced the children, by throwing ſome pieces of money among them, which purchaſed him a free and peaceable exit. Since then, M. Montague, whom I have formerly had occaſion to mention, offered in vain a very conſiderable ſum for permiſſion to viſit the interior of the moſque. But ſome time afterward, being committed to the charge of a ſcheick, whoſe thirſt of gold triumphed over the laws of fanaticiſm, it was opened for the admiſſion of every ſtranger who was diſpoſed to pay a chequin for it. The ſame year that I arrived at Alexandria, ſeveral Engliſhmen went in without ceremony; ſome of the populace perceived them, and murmured aloud. The commandant of Alexandria haſtened to reprimand the ſcheick, and laid him under an injunction to admit no Chriſtian whatever. The noiſe occaſioned by this incident, in a country where Europeans live in a ſtate of continual alarm, was too recent not to leave ſome ſolicitude behind. But our viſit to the moſque was ſo prudently conducted, that no inquiry enſued, and no one ever received information on the ſubject.

I was

I was witneſs, one day, of the terror excited in the minds of the French belonging to the factory, from the idea only of a ſeditious tumult at Alexandria. A merchant arrived with intelligence that an European had killed a native of the country. The gate of the factory was inſtantly ſhut; the bales began to be put in motion to ſtrengthen the bulwark; inquiries were made on board what veſſel they could run for ſafety, by dropping from the windows, when, fortunately, information was received that one Muſſulman had killed another.

Nevertheleſs, if a perpetual communication with the different nations of Europe had not hitherto been able to ſoften the manners of the Alexandrians, it muſt be acknowledged that it had already diſpoſed them to leſs intolerance on ſome particular points. Alexandria was, for example, with Roſetta, the only city of Egypt where Europeans were allowed to retain their native garb. Every where elſe they were prohibited to appear except in the oriental habit. It was not ſafe, however, to make an imprudent uſe of this indulgence; for, if we ſhewed ourſelves in numerous bodies, or made any thing like an oſtentatious appearance, particularly at a diſtance from the ſhipping, we run the riſk of being inſulted.

It was impoſſible to refrain from bearing ſome good will to the inhabitants of this country, for having preſerved to their town the name of the ancient city. We find *Alexandria*, in the Arabic name *Eſcanderié*; and the indignation, which you are unable to reſtrain, againſt the barbarians by whom the new city was rather infeſted than peopled, ceaſed for a moment on hearing them, which happened to me oftener than once, pronounce the name of Alexander with marks of reſpect. It is with them the attribute of courage and of victory. *Ennté Scander*, ſay they ſome times, *thou art an Alexander*; this is in their eyes the higheſt elogium of valour. So true it is that monuments of braſs and marble are not thoſe which perpetuate the memory of men. Great actions alone poſſeſs the power of tranſmitting their names, from age to age. Every thing elſe is effaced, every thing periſhes: virtue and benefits conferred remain, as unchangeable monuments reared in the heart, the eternal hetitage of admiration and gratitude.

The Venetians and the Engliſh had likewiſe commercial eſtabliſhments at Alexandria. The former, juſt as the French, purſued, in carrying on trade, the ſame track with their predeceſſors. The Engliſh, on the contrary, employed themſelves in ſtriking out new paths. The frequent voyages of their agents to India, their prodigality, which ſecures to them

them the good-will of the chiefs of the country, always diſpoſed to favour thoſe moſt who pay them beſt, in a word, their activity in conducting operations which they take care to keep ſecret, all announce the project which they had conceived, and which they had already in part effected, of appropriating to themſelves the excluſive commerce of India through the Red-ſea.

The city of Alexandria, ſo contracted in modern times, did not furniſh a conſumption of any importance. The commerce accordingly there carried on is a commerce of depoſit; but, as I have ſaid, it was conſiderable, and may become immenſe. The cuſtom-houſes returned very large ſums: the collection of this revenue was entruſted to a company of Chriſtian merchants of Syria. To form a judgment of their addreſs, it will be ſufficient to ſay that they had ſupplanted the Jews, to whom that branch of the revenue had been formerly committed.

The merchandize tranſported in European bottoms to Alexandria, is conveyed by water-carriage to Cairo, from whence, after having furniſhed a ſupply to the neceſſities and to the luxury of that populous city, it is diſperſed over all Arabia, over Upper Egypt, and even over Abyſſinia. The little barks employed in carrying goods from Alexandria to

to Roſſetta, the firſt city of Egypt on the Nile, and to carry back to Alexandria the commodities of Egypt and of Arabia, go by the name of *germes*. They are good ſtout boats, and of a tolerably handſome conſtruction. They are not decked, and draw but little water, and, according to their ſize, have two or three maſts, with very large triangular ſails, the yards of which, fixed to the top of the maſt, cannot be lowered; ſo that whatever weather it may be, the ſeamen are obliged to mount to the maſt-head to take in the ſails, a proceſs as tedious as it is difficult. Their burthen is, in general, from five to ſix tons. It would be very eaſy, no doubt, to conſtruct veſſels with decks, of a much larger ſize, and which ſhould not require a greater draught of water. Goods would not be ſo much expoſed, on board of ſuch boats, to be wet and injured by the ſea-water, as is frequently the caſe, and conveyance would not be ſubject to retardations, ſometimes prejudicial to commerce, from a ſwell of ſea which forbids the navigation of the *germes*. Though the diſtance they have to run at ſea is ſcarcely more than twelve leagues, and though there is a bay on the paſſage, in which they can find a ſafe retreat, at Aboukir, this coaſting voyage is far from being without danger. If a violent gale raiſes a ſwell on the ſhallows, where it is always moſt tumultuous, they run the riſk of filling and ſinking. But the moſt imminent danger which they have to encounter, is at

the diſcharge of the weſtern branch of the Nile, the ancient *Bolbitica*, now called the *Branch of Roſſetta*. It is a bar formed by the ſands, on which the billows driven by the winds from the ſea, and met by the current of the river, break with inconceivable impetuoſity. A little iſlet, dividing the diſcharge of this branch, leaves, on either ſide, a ſtrait called in the language of the country, *boghaſs*, canal or ſtrait: but this paſſage is far from practicable the whole breadth through. There is only a very narrow channel which the moveableneſs of the ſands, and the agitation of the water is changing every day. A pilot, *reis*, or maſter of the *boghaſs*, is continually employed in taking the ſoundings of this ever-varying paſs, that he may indicate them to the *germes*. Notwithſtanding theſe precautions, they frequently run aground, and very ſoon, filled with maſſes of ſand and water, periſh with their lading and their crews. Accidents are more frequent in entering the Nile, than on the outward paſſage, the *germes* coming from the ſea, not having it in their power to diſpenſe with taking the paſs, when they come cloſe upon it, whereas, on going down with the current of the river, they can eaſily get back, if, on approaching the bar, they find the paſſage hazardous. During the increaſe of the Nile, the waters being more elevated, accidents ſeldomer happen: but when the river has retreated into it's bed, it is ſo ſhallow at the place of diſcharge, that

boats

boats can hardly get through without touching the ground. However habituated the Egyptian mariners may be to the buſineſs, they never paſs this way without trembling. Some of them have been pointed out to me, who had undergone ſuch paroxiſms of terror from this cauſe, that their beards were turned white by it. During the ſummer of 1778, there were no more than three feet water in the channel. It has even been obſerved, that the bottom roſe progreſſively from year to year. The ſame thing has happened in the Damietta branch, the *boghaſs* of which, though ſurrounded with banks of ſand, which long practice had taught the ſeaman to ſhun, did not paſs for dangerous: it was not even taken into conſideration, in the arrangements made by merchants reſpecting the freight of *germes*. Nevertheleſs, toward the end of 1777, during my reſidence at Roſſetta, this paſſage was abſolutely cloſed up, after the riſe of the Nile was at it's height, and the firſt barks which attempted to paſs, were loſt. The danger incurred on that of the Roſſetta branch was increaſing every year, in proportion as the bottom roſe; and, as it was uſeleſs to expect, from the ignorance and apathy of Egyptians, the ſkill and labour requiſite to confine the current, and to procure a greater depth of water in the channel, there was all the reaſon in the world to preſume that, in a little time, no boat whatever would

venture to encounter that formidable bar. In this caſe, they muſt perhaps have thought of clearing out the canal of Alexandria, or, if the careleſſneſs of the inhabitants had infatuated them to ſuch a degree, as to neglect a work of ſo much importance, all communication by water muſt have been interrupted between Alexandria and the reſt of Egypt, and commerce reduced to employ the expenſive tranſportation of merchandize by land carriage.

This is the mode generally adopted by the travellers and traders of Europe, as well as by thoſe who prefer a ſlight increaſe of expenſe to the riſk of being drowned in the *boghaſs*. This is the conveyance I made uſe of in all the excurſions I ever undertook between Alexandria and Roſſetta.

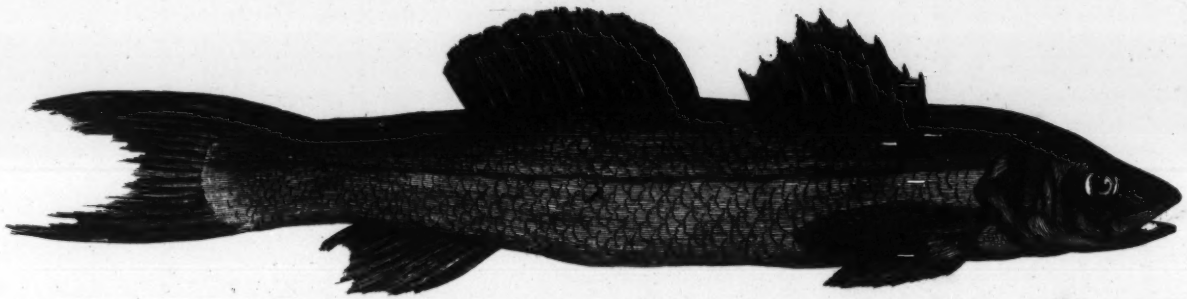
Before I quit the coaſt, I muſt take notice of the ſea-fiſhes which I had occaſion to remark, among the numerous ſpecies of which their fiſhery conſiſts. I have ſeen there that ſpecies of thornback known by the name of the *ſea-eagle*,* the fleſh of which is hard and ill-taſted; the *ſea-cat*,† which is not much better; the *palamides*, a ſpecies of ſmall

* *Raia corpore glabro, aculeo longo ſerrato in caudâ pinnatâ.* Arted. gen. 45.—*Raia aquila.* Lin.

† *Squalus dorſo vario; pinnis ventralibus concretis.* Arted. gen. 44. —*Squalus catulus.* Lin.

tunny;

3



Carousse, a Fish of the Coasts of Egypt.

tunny;* the pointed fiſh which they call the *eel*,† and the *mullet*,‡ which you ſee friſking about in calm weather, in ſhoals innumerable, on the ſurface of the water. They likewiſe catch there that fiſh which, on the tables of the Romans, occupied a diſtinguiſhed place, and to which they gave the name of *wolf*, from it's voraciouſneſs.§ The ſeamen of Provence call it *carouſſe*. I have had a drawing made of one of thoſe fiſhes, which was two feet and a half long. (See plate III.) It's head was bluiſh; it had red ſpots on the opercles of the gills, and the body of a blue blackiſh, and ſhaded with gray; theſe tints were deep above the lateral line, and clearer under it, with a yellowiſh mixture. Finally, what is more intereſting to the lovers of good cheer, you may eat excellent roaches there.‖

* *Scomber pelamis, pinnulis inferioribus ſeptem; corpore lineis utrinque quatuor nigris.* Arted. gen. 25.—*Scomber pelamis.* Lin.

† *Eſox roſtro cuſpidato, gracili, ſubteriti, ſpithamali.* Arted. gen. 10.—*Eſox belone.* Lin.

‡ *Trigla capite glabro lineis utrinque quatuor luteis longitudinalibus parallelis.* Arted. gen. 171.—*Mullus ſurmuletus.* Lin.

§ *Perca labrax, pinnis dorſalibus diſtinctis, ſecundæ radii quatuordecim.* Arted. gen. piſc. 30.—*Perca labrax.* Lin.

‖ *Trigla capite glabro, cirris geminis in maxillâ inferiori.* Arted. gen. 171.—*Mullus barbatus.* Lin.

CHAP. XIII.

Journey from Alexandria to Roſſetta—Maadié—Heraclea—Roſſetta and it's environs—Glance over the Delta.

PLACED between the Mediterranean ſea on one ſide, and a ſea of ſand on the other, modern Alexandria is iſolated, and ſeems to belong to no country. In order to arrive in other lands, it is neceſſary to truſt the inconſtancy of the waves, or to force a way through immenſe waſtes, impreſſed with the ſeal of the dereliction and the reprobation of nature. It is, or almoſt ſo, a deſert which you have to croſs, in travelling by land to Roſſetta. I have performed that journey ſeveral times; the firſt in company with the inſpector-general Tott, attended by a numerous retinue, among whom Savary was one. We left Alexandria July 12th, 1777, at ſeven o'clock in the evening. This train, I had almoſt ſaid this rabble of foreigners dreſſed as Frenchmen, gave umbrage to the inhabitants; we encountered, in paſſing through the city, inſults of various kinds, and were even pelted with ſtones, one of which, too well aimed, gave me a rude ſtroke on the breaſt. If I had poſſeſſed any faith in augury, I ſhould, undoubtedly, have relinquiſhed

linquiſhed a journey whoſe commencement was ſo inauſpicious. A miſadventure of another kind overtook us at ſome diſtance from the city. The aſs, loaded with the proviſions for the belly, enraged at bearing a burden of ſo much importance, ſhook off her panniers: bottles, plates, pies, &c. all was reduced to ſhivers. Half an hour almoſt was ſpent in collecting the wreck of this halt, and a horſe, leſs headſtrong, was loaded with the fragments. We were ſpeedily overtaken by the night; it was impoſſible to have been darker, and beſides the irkſomeneſs of marching a long time without ſeeing any thing, in regions utterly unknown, it was to me juſt as if I had not quitted Alexandria. I had, as my particular ſuit, an old ſervant well verſed in the art of travelling, a young draughtſman, and a naval gunner. We proceeded in a cloſe platoon, and, together with a janizary, compoſed the advanced guard. After having got half way on our route, we halted to take a little reſt. When it became expedient to put the body again in motion, every one had to run in queſt of his own beaſt which he had let looſe, and which the darkneſs prevented him from finding or diſtinguiſhing: all was outcry, wrangling; the muleteers were beating each other, the janizaries beating every body. In the midſt of this hurly-burly, my little cohort was mounted, from the moment that the ſignal for decamping was made, and we enjoyed, at our eaſe, the comic

ſcenes which were paſſing around us. We had taken care to range our mules apart, and could reſume them at pleaſure. A complete hour was waſted in rectifying a diſorder which might eaſily have been prevented; and this obſervation is not foreign to the purpoſe: it proves that in travelling, as in military expeditions, order and attention are equally indiſpenſable, and that by neglecting them, inconveniencies are ſometimes incurred ſtill greater than even that of the loſs of precious time.

We arrived at Roſſetta, at 6 o'clock in the morning, and ſlept till dinner time, without minding the preparations going forward under the direction of a capuchin almoner, for celebrating a ſolemn maſs, which was to be followed by a *Te Deum*. In the afternoon we ſet off for Cairo with the ſame rapidity; remained almoſt continually cloſe ſhut up in that city, for a month, and returned to Roſſetta with the ſame ſpeed that we left it. This is what our gentlemen of *bon ton* call travelling. They return afterwards to Europe, to reaſon with aſſurance on every ſubject, and ſometimes to write of, and to deſcribe, objects which they never ſaw.

It is, moreover, the cuſtom to travel between Alexandria and Roſſetta in the night time, in order to eſcape the ſultry heat of a burning ſun. But devoted, for a long ſeries of years, to purſue my

travels

travels through climates of fire, I had learned to ſupport all the ardor of the orb of day; fully convinced, beſides, that there is never too much light for a traveller who wiſhes to procure uſeful information, I have ſince travelled over the ſame ground in the day time: it is computed to be a journey of about twelve hours. Carriages not being in uſe there, they employ mules, which you find ready for hire, both at Alexandria and Roſſetta, at a fixed and very moderate price. Their pace is a very long amble, by means of which they can cover a great deal of ground, without fatiguing themſelves too much. Theſe animals were ſo habituated to the road, that it was unneceſſary to guide them, and that, whether by night or by day, they never deviated from their courſe, which, on a moving ſand, can neither be traced nor formed into a path, they had, accordingly neither bridle nor bit, but only a ſorry halter.

Though there be no place of habitation on this route, it is not, properly ſpeaking, a deſert. You ſee on one ſide, for half the way, and at a little diſtance, a few ſtraggling houſes and a town; and, through the remainder, you meet with ſigns which indicate that the habitations of men are not very remote. Beſides, the traveller has no reaſon to be apprehenſive of the violent guſts of wind from the ſouth, ſo formidable in the vaſt plains of ſand with which

which Egypt is ſurrounded. Savary, who was acquainted with no deſert but this, has applied to it what he has heard related of ſuch as are really ſo. "Wo be to him," exclaims he, "whom a whirl-"wind from the ſouth ſurprizes in this ſolitude! "Unleſs he is provided with a tent to ſhelter him, "he is aſſaulted by clouds of burning duſt which "fill his eyes and mouth, and deprive him of the "power of reſpiration and of ſight. The wiſeſt "courſe is to perform this journey by night."* Nothing aſſuredly can be more terrible than thoſe whirlwinds from the ſouth, but it is certain that nothing of this kind is to be apprehended between Alexandria and Roſſetta; that no one there ever loſt his life by clouds of burning duſt, and that it is phyſically impoſſible ſuch a calamity ſhould befal the traveller in thoſe parts. In fact, the wind is cooled as it comes from the ſouth, by the waters of the lakes and of the canals which it croſſes, and they would intercept the columns of ſand carried along by the wind, if, beſides, it could raiſe a very great quantity in paſſing over the cultivated plains of *Bahira*. There exiſted a danger more real; that of being plundered. There were, it is true, guards eſtabliſhed to protect the roads. They were to give notice in both the cities, whenever they perceived any ſuſpicious body of men; travelling then underwent interruption, till proclamation was made that

* Letters on Egypt, vol. i. page 45.

the

the track was clear. But the expeditions of the Bedouin robbers, and, according to circumſtances, they all are ſo, are executed with ſo much promptitude, overtake the traveller ſo unexpectedly, from cantons out of which no human being was looked for, that the very act of robbery is the firſt ſignal of their preſence, and that it is far from a thing uncommon for travellers to become the victims of it.

On leaving Alexandria, the courſe is to the eaſt north-eaſt, and you travel along the baſe of a promontory which, from Alexandria, riſes toward the north. At it's extremity is *Aboukir*, a town built on the ruins of Canopus. The coaſt of this promontory, as I have already remarked, is not ſo low as that of the tower of the Arabs, and though formed of hillocks of ſand, neither has it the ſame aſpect of ſolitude and ſterility: human habitations, and land in a ſtate of cultivation, meet the eye.

After riding about ſix leagues, you find yourſelf on the brink of a kind of lake, a remainder of the Canopic branch of the Nile. At preſent, to ſpeak properly, it is nothing but a ſalt-water marſh, which has no longer any communication with the Nile, except at the ſeaſon of it's greateſt height. It is fordable on horſeback when the river, in it's inundation, or the ſea raiſed by a tempeſt, have not increaſed it's depth; in theſe caſes it is croſſed by a boat,

boat, which was perhaps the leaſt ſafe and the moſt incommodious of all ferries. The mouth of this ancient branch of the Nile is very much ſtraitened, and formed by a bar of ſand. The goëlands* graze at all times the ſurface of the water, to ſurprize the ſmall fry from the ſea which enter by it; I have likewiſe ſeen there the coot† and the pelican.‡ On the eaſtern bank is a vaſt ſquare building, the conſtruction of which is ſimilar to that of the French factory at Alexandria; it is ſimilar to that of all the caravanſeras in Egypt, *hockals*; but in giving them the name of inn,§ it muſt be allowed that certain travellers have done rather too much honour to a place where there is abſolutely nothing elſe to be had but a well of deteſtable water.

This place is named *Maadié*, which ſignifies *paſſage*. With an intention to diſcover ſome veſtiges of the ancient *Heraclea*, the poſition of which Dr. Shaw determines by that of Maadié, I viſited with all the accuracy of obſervation this building, as well as it's environs; but whether it be that Hera-

* *Mouette cendrée*. Buffon, Hiſt. Nat. des Oiſ.—*Larus canus*. Lin.

† *Foulque*, Buffon, Hiſt. Nat. des Oiſ. & pl. enlum. No. 197. —*Fulica atra*. Lin.

‡ *Pélican*. Buffon, Hiſt. Nat. des Oiſ. & pl. enlum. No. 87. —*Pelicanus onocratulus*. Lin.

§ Cornelius le Bruyn.

clea

clea was ſituated elſewhere, or whether the ſands have completely concealed it's ruins, I could perceive nothing that indicated the edifices of a remote period; the houſe, conſtructed of white ſtones, and theſe not very hard, is entirely modern. Except the gate, in rearing which they have employed a large block of granite, and another fragment of gray marble enriched with ſculpture, nothing antique is there to be ſeen. But about half a league farther on, you remark on the coaſt ſome ancient walls and wrecks, which the eye can purſue, in calm weather, advancing a conſiderable way into the ſea, and theſe are probably the traces of Heraclea.

After having reſted a few hours under the ſhade of the walls of the building of Maadié, we got into the open plain. The land is ſo low in this gulf, for from *Aboukir* the ſea forms a vaſt bay, that, but for dikes of a very ſolid conſtruction, the waters would cover a great extent of country: in ſtormy weather they force themſelves over the dikes, ſpread behind the elevated coaſt of the promontory of Aboukir, and inundate all the vicinity. You keep cloſe by the ſea for almoſt four leagues, on the ſand which is bathed by the billows, the dry ſand being too much in a moveable ſtate. You trample under foot ſhells of every ſpecies, among which I could diſtinguiſh muſcles, pholads, limpets, and trumpets.

trumpets. Sea-larks,* chevaliers,† maubêches,‡ hop and flutter about on the ſhore; ſome curliews§ likewiſe reſort thither in queſt of their prey, while ſwarms of goëlands, of the great and of the ſmall ſpecies, croſs each other as they ſkim inceſſantly along the face of the waters; numerous tribes of porpoiſes reflect the vivid colours of the rainbow from their arched and humid backs; the waves themſelves which, as they return in ſucceſſion to ſpread over the beach, ſeem to play among the feet of the mules; all theſe objects compoſe a ſpectacle which inſpires pleaſure, and attracts attention, when for a long time one has been encompaſſed only with a ſterile uniformity; they agreeably fix the eyes, and prevent their roving toward the ſouth, where all that preſents itſelf to view is a ſandy wild, terminating in hills of the ſame deſcription, and ſadly interrupted by here and there an iſolated and ſtraggling palm-tree.

Travellers are glad to ſtop for a few moments at the tomb of a holy Mahometan, built cloſe by the ſea; an Arab, who lives there, preſents coffee and

* *Alouette de mer.* Buffon, Hiſt. Nat. des Oiſ. & pl. enlum. No. 581.—*Tringla cinclus.* Lin.

† *Chevalier commun.* Id. ibid. No. 844.—*Tringa littorea.* Lin.

‡ *Maubêche commune.* Id. ibid.—*Tringa callidris.* Lin.

§ *Courlis*, firſt ſpecies. Id. ibid. No. 818.—*Scolopax arquata.* Lin.

brackiſh

brackiſh and warm water, which the thirſt, occaſioned by the heat of the ſun and by the duſt, makes a man ſwallow with delight. A ſmall brick tower admoniſhes you that you muſt quit the ſhore;* other little towers, which you perceive in the ſame direction, that of eaſt-ſouth-eaſt, ſerve as a guide into a moving plain, in the midſt of which you might eaſily loſe yourſelf, and ſo much the more that the city of Roſſetta, begirt, toward the weſt, by accumulated ſands, is not diſcernable till the very inſtant that you enter the firſt ſtreet. You reckon, before you arrive, eleven of thoſe little towers, ſome of which having a greater circumference than the others, are not maſſy, and preſent, in their interior, a ſhelter to travellers, and a place of prayer to the Mahometans.†

Here

* This little tower of brick is probably that which Danville calls *Caſa Roſſa* in his chart of Egypt.

† Dr. Shaw (vol. ii. of his travels, p. 22) ſays, that the caravans are directed from Medea to Roſſetta, a ſpace of four leagues, by great ſtakes driven into the ground, ſimilar to thoſe of *Schibkah el-low-dea*, or *lake of the marks* in Barbary. But, without mentioning the calculation of the diſtance, in which there is a ſmall miſtake, theſe marks of *Schibkah el-low-dea*, according to the ſame Dr. Shaw, (vol. i. p. 274) are nothing but trunks of the palm-tree, whereas thoſe which indicate the road to Roſſetta, are towers built of brick. I would not have pointed out this ſlight inaccuracy in the work of a traveller leſs eſtimable, and whom I conſider as one of the moſt intelligent and the

Here the ſcene changes, as it were, by enchantment; the tranſition could not be more ſudden, nor the contraſt more ſtriking: it is no longer a ſeries of thoſe overwhelming ruins, of plains rendered hideous by ſterility; it is nature decorated with all her coſtlineſs of apparel, and ſcattering her gifts with magnificence unexampled, and with a profuſion equally varied and uniformly ſupported. The eye, inflamed by a ſcorching ſun, torn by grains of ſand ſcattered through a burning atmoſphere, repoſes deliciouſly on a horizon which preſents to it images the moſt refreſhing, and ſmiling with the gayeſt aſpect.

Roſſetta is a handſome city, very populous, ſimply but agreeably built. It is modern, and if it does not contain edifices of an impoſing architecture, it diſplays nothing, at leaſt, to excite diſguſt. The Nile bathes it's walls on the eaſt ſide; rendered leſs impetuous by the waters which it furniſhes, as it flows, to canals and watering conduits, repelled beſides by the bar which ſeparates it from the ſea, at the place of it's diſcharge, it has not the dangerous rapidity of great rivers; it carries with

the moſt correct of thoſe who have traverſed that part of Africa. The moſt rational ſuppoſition that can be formed on the ſubject is, that Shaw, juſt as almoſt every other body, travelled by night from Alexandria to Roſſetta.

tranquillity

tranquillity the riches of three quarters of the globe, and diffuſes abundance over it's ſhores; it's vicinity has nothing to create an alarm; and it's very extravagations are benefits.

A vaſt cultivated champaign extends to the north of the city; it is laid out in garden grounds: theſe are not divided and encloſed, in a dry harſh manner, by gloomy walls; odoriferous hedges ſurround groves of perfume ſtill more odoriferous. Neither muſt you go thither in queſt of thoſe ſtraight-lined alleys, of thoſe ſtiff flower borders, or thoſe methodical compartments, the monuments which art rears in our monotonous encloſures. Every thing there ſeems to be the arrangement of chance: the orange and the citron trees interlace their branches, and the pomegranate hangs down by the ſide of the corſoſol. Under a ſky which never knows the blighting of a hoar-froſt, their flowers exhale, at all ſeaſons, a perfume which the ſweet odour of the cluſters of the *henna** renders ſtill more delicious. Pot-herbs grow luxuriantly under this balmy ſhade. The date-tree, rearing it's ſummit above the other trees of it's vicinity, preſents a deviation from the ſlighteſt appearance of uniformity: no one tree, no one plant has a determinate place; every thing there is varied, every thing is ſcattered about with a ſpecies of irregula-

* A tall ſhrub, of which I ſhall ſay more preſently.

rity ſubjected to no law but profuſion, and which may be reviewed, day after day, with new pleaſure. Is not this confuſion, after all, the ſymmetry of nature? The ſun has ſcarcely power to force his rays through the foliage of thoſe tufted orchards; ſmall ſtreamlets convey thither, winding as they flow, the coolneſs and the aliment of vegetation; ſerpentine paths lead to them. There it is that the indolent Turk, ſeated all day long with his pipe and his coffee, ſeems to meditate profoundly, and thinks of nothing. More worthy of enjoying thoſe enchanting retreats, had he the ſkill to ſhare them with a beloved female companion; but the example of the birds, the amorous cooing of the turtle doves, which animate thoſe bowers of nature, are incapable of diſpoſing his ſoul to tenderneſs, or of ſtealing him out of his cold apathy, out of his melancholy inſenſibility. He flees, with diſdain, the commerce of a ſex whoſe preſence would confer additional charms on ſcenes of delight, and, under the dominion of proud indifference, would repel the hand of the Graces, were they to attempt to raiſe there an altar to conjugal bliſs. The unſocial Muſſulman reſpects, at leaſt, what he diſdains to imitate: thoſe ſame turtle-doves, emblem of love and fidelity, live by him in perfect ſecurity; he never thinks of diſturbing their repoſe; he takes pleaſure in beholding them court his ſociety; in a word, they are to him ſacred birds. The European alone

alone dared to violate this aſylum: I have ſometimes ſeen him, regardleſs of the murmurs of the natives, making it a paſtime to ſcatter terror and death among a winged generation of lovers; barbarous amuſement, for which the pretext of diſplaying addreſs as a markſman, or the ſlight motive of utility, could plead no excuſe, as thoſe birds, habituated to the haunts of man, never ſhun the preſence of the ſtranger, and as, on the other hand, their fleſh furniſhes but a ſorry repaſt.

If the eye is carried to the other ſide of the river, a plain expands to view which has no boundary but the horizon: this is the Delta.* Iſſuing out of the boſom of the waters, it preſerves the freſhneſs of it's origin: to the golden tints of exuberant autumn ſucceeds, the very ſame year, the verdure of the meadows. Orchards, ſimilar to thoſe in the vicinity of Roſſetta, groups of trees, green all the year round, others ſcattered about at random, flocks of every kind diverſify the points of view and enliven this rich and verdant portion of Egypt. Numerous towns and villages enhance

* I am well aware that the ancients took the baſe of the Delta from the Canopic branch of the Nile (Strabo, book xvii.); but this Canopic branch being loſt, and the land contained between it and Roſſetta being ſandy, ſteril, and uninhabited, the Delta, which is aſſociated with the idea of fertility, ought no longer to be taken but from the Holbitic branch, that of Roſſetta.

the beauty of the landſcape; here, the cities diſplay in viſta their lofty and pointed turrets; there, expand lakes and canals, a ſource of fecundity inexhauſtible; every where are diſtinguiſhable the ſigns of an eaſy cultivation, of an eternal ſpring, and of a fertility inceſſantly renovated and endleſsly varied.*

Roſſetta is likewiſe the place of Egypt whoſe tranquillity is the leaſt liable to diſcompoſure. Nothing is known there of thoſe inſurrections, thoſe tumults, that reſtleſs agitation which diſturb the peace of the other cities. There the ſtranger was in perfect ſecurity, and could walk about at his eaſe, without being obliged to aſſume the dreſs of the country, which was impoſſible for him to do in any other part of Egypt. He rambled over the plains, he penetrated into encloſures, he traverſed the gardens in every direction, trampled vegetation under his feet, while no one took offence at what he did. In the courſe of thoſe delightful excurſions, which I loved frequently to repeat, the huſbandman or the gardener invited me into his cottage, and treated me with coffee. With the ſame manners, the ſame uſages, the ſame ignorance and fanaticiſm, the inhabitants of Roſſetta would have remained, as thoſe of the ruins of Alexandria, as

* An idea may be formed of this part of Egypt, by caſting the eye over plate viii. of this work.

thoſe

thoſe who live at the bottom of the parched rocks of Upper Egypt, the moſt ferocious barbarians on the globe; but, planted on a ſoil fertile and ſmiling, whoſe freſhneſs and copious productions temper the ardour of the climate and the dryneſs of the atmoſphere, their manners are ſoftened, their character has loſt it's aſperity. A change to be aſcribed to the happy diſpoſitions of nature, and to the influence of agriculture, which is, ſtill more than commerce, the firſt inſtructor of nations, and the moſt direct method to draw them from a ſtate of barbariſm, and to ſtimulate them to a rapid and aſſured progreſs toward civilization.

CHAP. XIV.

Diſturbances at Cairo—Oriental dreſs—Boats of the Nile—Winter—Roſſetta—Commerce — Rice, it's culture, and it's antiquity in Egypt—Trefoil—Oxen and cows.

WHETHER it be that the traveller, after having dwelt for ſome time in the duſt, and amidſt the ruins of Alexandria, after having traverſed the twelve leagues of ſcorched plains, which ſeparate that city from the banks of the Nile; in a word, after having ſurmounted the hills of ſand which run cloſe up to Roſſetta on the weſt, arrives there, or rather ſeems all at once to drop into it; or whether he has quitted a diſagreeable and dangerous reſidence at Cairo, a habitation at Roſſetta becomes a moſt deſirable retreat, which compariſon renders delicious. With an intention to penetrate into Upper Egypt, and afterwards into Abyſſinia, I had, at firſt, made a rapid progreſs to Cairo, as I have mentioned, in company with M. Tott, who left me there. Circumſtances could not have been more unpropitious. The diſſenſions which ſo frequently ariſe among the potentates of Egypt had reached the higheſt pitch of fury. The Saïd was filled with combatants, and infeſted with robbers;

robbers; while at Cairo, the European, confined to his own home, or, at leaſt, to a narrow quarter of the town, trembling every moment for his life, durſt not ſhew his face amidſt a confuſion, an uproar, of which it is impoſſible to form an idea, without having lived in this capital of Egypt. I waited in expectation that the troubles would ſubſide, and permit me to enter on the execution of my deſign; but wearied out with the anxious ſtate of inaction to which I was reduced, tired of living the life of a recluſe, and ſeeing no proſpect of the era when Egypt was to reſume a tranquillity which could admit of travelling through it without being expoſed to certain danger, I reſolved on returning to Roſſetta, a privileged country, which the commotions of the reſt of Egypt did not reach, and in which the ſtranger had it in his power to walk about unmoleſted, eſpecially if he had the prudence to conform to the cuſtoms of the country.

I had, at Cairo, laid aſide my European dreſs, and aſſumed the Turkiſh habit. To this I was obliged to make a ſacrifice of my hair; an enormous turban, *a la Druſe*, enveloped, in various rounds, my cloſe-ſhaven head, and ſheltered it from the attacks of an ardent ſun; veſtments long and wide, which a ſilken girdle hardly confined, covered my body, without compreſſing it, and left every limb perfectly at eaſe. No part is cramped, nothing

ſtrains in the Oriental garb; and, after having worn it for ſome time, you become ſenſible how incommodious are the ſtrictures of our narrow and ſcanty apparel, and you find the reſumption of it uneaſy. My draughtſman, and my two French attendants had, in like manner, changed their garments; but they wore a habit leſs ample and more ſpruce: that of the *ſerrachs*, foot ſoldiers attached to the beys: muſtachios garniſhed our lips, and long ſcimitars dangled along by our ſides.

We left Cairo with heart-felt ſatisfaction, October 20th, 1771, at one o'clock in the afternoon, and embarked on board a kanja, a ſpecies of boat employed in the navigation of the Nile. Their conſtruction is elegant, and they ſail remarkably well; you have them of various ſizes. At the ſame time that they ſerve for the conveyance of merchandize, they have in the after-part, for the accommodation of paſſengers, one or more well-aired apartments, which would be abundantly agreeable, were they not infeſted with myriads of fleas, lice, bugs, and other vermin. During the two days and two nights of our paſſage to Roſſetta, it was impoſſible for me to cloſe my eyes for a ſingle inſtant, and my companions were in the ſame deplorable condition. A prey to the inceſſant bitings of a prodigious quantity of thoſe abominable inſects, we were tormented in a manner altogether

altogether inconceivable; our bodies were an uninterrupted continuity of little wounds and ſmarting blifters. I had been expoſed, in South America, to the ſtings of innumerable ſwarms of muſquitos, but I do not remember that I ever ſuffered ſo much as in that accurſed kanja.

Theſe boats likewiſe have, as the germes of Alexandria, immenſe triangular ſails, attached to ſail-yards of a very extraordinary length. (See plate VIII.) Theſe yards too, like the others, are not made to lower; and when the veſſel is under ſail, it is impoſſible to make them change their ſide of the maſt, aloft, to go on the other tack; ſo that in the frequent neceſſity of putting about, occaſioned by the ſinuoſities of the Nile, the ſails are for ſome time backed cloſe to the maſts and ſhrouds, without a poſſibility of reefing or lowering them. The wind being unſteady, the ſqualls frequent and furious, and the boatmen ignorant in the extreme, it is by no means uncommon to ſee ſome of thoſe boats, in ſuch a poſition, go to the bottom. The one on which we were embarked, was freighted for my ſole uſe; there was no one on board but ourſelves and our baggage. I had leiſure and opportunity to converſe with the maſter. I endeavoured to make him comprehend that, by means of certain ſlight arrangements, it would be eaſy for him to avoid

avoid the danger, but too real, of overſetting. He admitted all I ſaid; but ſtill had recourſe to the ordinary argument of jog-trot ignorance: *it is the common practice.*

We encountered, during theſe two days of navigation on the Nile, a very thick fog, which did not diſperſe before ten o'clock in the morning, when it fell in a very fine ſhower of ſmall rain. Theſe fogs were the forerunners of winter. But, by the word winter, is not to be underſtood that ſharp and cold temperature which, for ſeveral months of the year, checks the progreſs of vegetation, and pinches the human ſpecies ſo ſeverely, over the greateſt part of our Europe. Hoar-froſts are unknown in the climate of Lower Egypt. The water is never congealed, and nature never clothes herſelf with that mantle of old age, under which we would think her expiring, were we not habituated to behold her regularly reſuming her ſpring attire. There, the winds from the ſea, and the rains, only cool the air, during the three winter months,* without freezing the fluids, without rendering artificial heat neceſſary to man, without interrupting the progreſs of vegetation, without the verdure's ceaſing to embelliſh the plains and to delight the eye.

* The months of November, December, and January.

It

It is under this happy temperature, and on a ſoil wonderfully freſh and verdant, that the city of Roſſetta is ſituated, where we arrived on the 22d of the month, at four o'clock in the afternoon, not having been retarded a ſingle inſtant on the voyage.

I went on ſhore at the houſe of the vice-conſul of France, M. de Troüi, whoſe taſte for the belles-lettres provided him with a charm for his ſolitude; I accepted the lodging under his roof, which he tendered me in the moſt gracious manner; and I found again in the interpreter, Fornéti, the ſame attentions, the ſame complaiſance, for which I ſtood indebted to Meſſrs. Adanſon and Auguſtus, while at Alexandria. Some French merchants lived in the ſame building; it was a vaſt *hockal*, of a ſimilar form, but much more lofty than that of the French factory at Alexandria. It is cloſe upon the Nile, and, like all the other houſes of Roſſetta, is built of brick.

The city is named by the natives, *Raſchid*, the Arabic appellation which it bore as far back as the time of the geographer Edriſſi, in 1153, and which the Europeans have transformed into Roſſetta.*

Some

* And not *Roſetta*, as it is now commonly written. *Roſetta* is, I grant, ſofter in the pronunciation: this word ſuggeſts an idea more pleaſant and more analagous to the delicious fragrance

and

Some others have thought that it was the ſite of Canopus: but this is a miſtake. The Canopic branch is the ſalt-marſh of *Maadié*, and the ruins of Canopus are at *Aboukir*. Roſſetta preſents no one trace of antiquity; it is, nevertheleſs, certain that it cannot be far diſtant from the ſpot where the ancient *Metelis*, or *Metilis*, ſtood, of which Strabo and Ptolemy make mention, and which was on the weſtern ſhore, and near the diſcharge of the Bolbitic branch of the Nile.*

It is, beyond contradiction, the moſt agreeable city in Egypt, and would be ſo any where elſe. It's houſes much better built, in general, than thoſe of Cairo, it's poſition on the bank of the river, the

and fertility of the gardens with which the city is ſurrounded; but, where proper names are concerned, it is cuſtom which muſt give the law, and cuſtom pronounces the firſt ſyllable hard, *Roſſetta*, derived from the ſtill harſher Arabic name, *Raſchid*. This is aſſuredly a very frivolous obſervation, and I would not forgive myſelf for having made it, unleſs, on my publiſhing, in the *Journal de Phyſique*, ſome obſervations on the hippopotamus, a certain *Traveller*, in a *note* which he annexed to them, had given me a grave rebuke, for having written the Arabic word *baar* with only a ſingle *r*. Oh! when a man has undergone criticiſm for an *r* too little, he is equally expoſed to it for an *ſ* too much. What is ſingularly pleaſant, this *Traveller*, inſtead of an *r* put in his correction a *z*, ſo that it became neceſſary, the month following, by a ſecond *erratum* to correct the firſt.

* The Romans named the mouth of this branch of the Nile, *Bolbitinum oſtium*.

proſpect

proſpect which it commands of the Delta, preſenting the ſmiling image of the richeſt cultivation, the perfumed groves which ſurround it, the pure and wholeſome air you there reſpire, have procured for it the well-merited name of the *Garden of Egypt*. Every article of neceſſary or luxurious conſumption is there to be found in profuſion; there you behold long ſtreets formed by a double row of ſhops, in which every ſpecies of merchandize is expoſed to ſale; the neceſſaries of life are in the greateſt abundance, and at a very moderate price. But Roſſetta poſſeſſed allurements ſufficient, without aſcribing to it others which have no exiſtence, and dependance on which might have betrayed travellers into error, and involved them in diſtreſs. Cornelius le Bruyn, for example, who ſaw inns wherever he went,* or his tranſlator for him, ſays, that *Roſſetta is the moſt agreeable of cities, from the great number of inns for the comfortable accommodation of travellers.*† Who would not have imagined from this, that no precaution on the part of the traveller was requiſite in order to be at his eaſe on arriving at Roſſetta, and that he had only to alight at the firſt houſe of entertainment that caught his eye? But he would have been ſadly diſappointed, for there is abſolutely no ſuch thing in the city. The cara-

* Look back to page 204.

† Travels of Cornelius le Bruyn, vol. ii. p. 110, note *a*.

vanſeras, which by no means ſupply their place, preſent nothing, uſually, here as well as in the other countries under the Turkiſh government, but a mere place of retreat, deſtitute of every manner of accommodation except four bare walls, where nothing is furniſhed but water, and where the ſtranger is laid under the neceſſity of providing himſelf with every thing he wants. Travellers from Europe were uſually received by the merchants of their ſeveral nations, who were ſettled in hired houſes of their own.

Roſſetta is the commercial depoſitory between Cairo and Alexandria; it there diffuſes life, motion, and abundance. It likewiſe poſſeſſes ſome branches of commerce peculiar to itſelf, ſuch as ſpun cotton dyed red, which comes to market from the adjacent cantons; dreſſed flax, linen and cotton ſtuffs, drugs for ſilk-dying, the materials of oriental clothing, &c. &c. Another object which, without being ſo conſiderable as at Damietta, is not for that of leſs importance, is the exportation of rice, in Arabic, *rouſs*.* At the time of my arrival, toward the end of October, they were buſily employed in the drying of this valuable grain, a wholeſome and pleaſant aliment to many of the nations of the earth; they were ſpreading it out on the terraces of the houſes, and in the public ſquares.

* *Oryza ſativa*. Lin.

It

It is alleged that to this operation is to be aſcribed the multitude of gnats * with which the city, and the interior of the houſes were at that ſeaſon filled. In truth, there are not ſuch ſwarms of them at other times. After the rice is reaped, they iſſue in crowds innumerable from the inundated fields in which the preceding generation had depoſited their eggs. They come to torment men; and to ſuck their blood, to dart ſtings more pungent than thoſe of the muſquitos, ſo well-known, of South America. †

Rice is ſown, in Lower Egypt, from the month of March till May. During the inundation of the Nile, the fields are covered by it's waters; and, in order to retain them as long as poſſible, they raiſe around each field little dikes, a kind of mound to prevent their running off. Aqueducts ſerve to ſupply them with additional moiſture; for it is neceſſary to the plant's thriving, that the root be conſtantly ſoaked in water. The earth is ſo completely drenched with this proceſs, that in ſome places you ſink into it up to the middle. Rice is about ſix months in the ground before it attains full maturity; and is generally cut down about the middle of November. The uſe of the flail is not known

* *Culex antennis pilis verticilatis; roſtro cinereo, apice nigro, craſſiuſculo; dorſo fuſco, faſciis ſex pallidis.* Forſkal, Deſcrip. Animal. Oriental.

† *Culex hæmorrhoïdalis.* Lin.

in

in Egypt. In order to ſeparate the grain from the ſtraw, they prepare, with a mixture of earth and doves-dung, ſpacious areas, well compacted and made perfectly clean. On theſe the rice is depoſited in deep layers. They next employ a ſpecies of cart, formed of two pieces of wood faſtened together by two croſs bars, nearly of the form of thoſe ſledges which are uſed to drag heavy loads along the pavement of the ſtreets of our cities. Between the lengthwiſe ſides of this ſledge are fixed tranſverſely three rows of little wheels of ſolid iron, and brought to an edge at the circumference. On the fore part, a ſeat very high and very broad is rudely conſtructed. On this a man is placed, who guides two oxen which are yoked to the machine, and the whole is moved ſlowly, and in a circular direction over all the parts of a pile of rice, till no more grain remains attached to the ſtraw. Having undergone this operation, it is ſpread out in the air to dry. The manner of turning it over is very amuſing. A great many men walk, along ſide of each other, and each of them furrows, with one foot, the layer of grain, ſo that in a few moments the whole maſs is ſtirred about, and what was before undermoſt is again expoſed to the air.

The rice, when dried, is carried to the mill, where it is ſtripped of it's huſk or envelope. This mill conſiſts of a ſingle wheel turned round by oxen, and

and which puts in motion many levers, at the extremity of which is a cylinder of iron near a foot long, and hollowed below. They beat into the troughs which contain the grain. By the ſide of each trough a man is ſtationed, whoſe aſſiduous employment it is to bring forward the rice to the action of the cylinders. His attention to this buſineſs muſt be undiſtracted: for he would run the riſk of having his hand cruſhed off, if he failed to draw it back at the inſtant. This part of the proceſs being executed, the rice is withdrawn from the mill, and ſifted in the open air, which is performed in a very ſimple manner, by filling a ſmall ſieve with as much grain as a man can eaſily carry; he raiſes this ſieve-full above his head, and gently pours the rice out of it, with his face from the wind, which carries off the chaff and duſt. The rice thus cleaned is put a ſecond time to the mill to be whitened. They mix ſalt with it in the troughs, which contributes greatly towards giving it a fair colour, and, above all, towards it's preſervation. It has now paſſed through the whole preparatory proceſs, and is ready to go to market.

It is only on the low lands of Lower Egypt that rice is cultivated. Farther to the ſouth, the ſoil, too elevated, could not admit of being ſoaked by the ſheet of water which, in order to the ſucceſs of this branch of agriculture, muſt be diffuſed over

the whole ſurface. The Delta, that inexhauſtible depoſit of the riches of nature, furniſhes a prodigious quantity of it. That which is reaped in the vicinity of Roſſetta, is in higher eſtimation than that of the plains which ſurround Damietta. This ſuperior quality is probably to be aſcribed to the mode of preparation, which is more carefully attended to in the former of theſe two cities; for the nature of the climate and ſoil is the ſame. In the neighbourhood of both, the culture of rice ſucceeds equally well, and it's produce is equally aſtoniſhing. The profits of the proprietors of rice-grounds are valued, in good years, thoſe in which the elevation of the Nile produces the greateſt expanſion of it's waters, at fifty per cent, after deducting all expenſe.

It has frequently been propoſed, in France, to appropriate to herſelf the culture of rice; it would prove, aſſuredly, a valuable acquiſition to our domeſtic agriculture. But, if we reflect that in Egypt, it requires ſix months to come to maturity, and that, during theſe ſix months, it ſtands in need of conſtant heat and humidity, few parts of the republic will be found, which promiſe, for this branch of culture, certain and abundant crops.

It has been a ſubject of much diſcuſſion, to aſcertain whether or not the ancient Egyptians cultivated the rice plant, and, as is the caſe in almoſt

all

all enquiries of a ſimilar nature, the mind is ſtill left in a ſtate of uncertainty. According to Meſſrs. Shaw* and Goguet,† the people of Egypt, in ancient times, lived on rice. But M. Paw aſſerts, that this plant was a greater ſtranger to thoſe very Egyptians, than the caſſavi of Braſil is, at this day, to the inhabitants of Germany. He adds, that it was not till the time of the caliphs that the firſt grain of rice was imported from India into Lower Egypt, where the cultivation of it firſt began in the environs of Damietta, and he quotes Frederic Haſſelquitz as his authority.‡ In truth, the Swediſh traveller has affirmed that, conformably to appearances, the Egyptians learned the method of cultivating rice, under the domination of the caliphs: for, ſays he, it was during their reign, that a great many uſeful plants were imported thither, by the way of the Red Sea.§ We have then nothing for it but a conjecture of Haſſelquitz, ſupported by no authority whatever.

On the other hand, the oppoſite ſentiment, that which reckons the cultivation of rice among the

* Shaw's Travels, p. 391.

† Origin of Laws, Vol. ii. p. 344.

‡ Philoſophical reſearches reſpecting the Egyptians and Chineſe, vol. i. p. 138.

§ Voyage to the Levant, by Fred. Haſſelquitz, tranſl. from the German, part i. p. 163.

other branches of agriculture, with the ancient Egyptians, reſts on a fact not eaſily to be deſtroyed. M. de Caylus, whom his taſte for antiquities has raiſed to celebrity, deſcribes an idol of Oſiris, in bronze, which had been encloſed in a caſe of plaſter. In order to render the joinings of this caſe more firm and ſolid, over a ſubſtance ſo ſmooth as bronze, and without a hold in ſeveral places, they had made uſe of the ſtraw of rice, *very eaſily diſtinguiſhable.** M. Paw, it is true, calls in queſtion the botanical knowledge of M. de Caylus,† as if it required profound ſkill in the ſcience of plants, to be able to diſtinguiſh the ſtraw of rice from that of other farinaceous vegetables. Beſides, the examination of this idol was not made by M. de Caylus only. M. de Boſe delivered a diſſertation, before the Academy of Inſcriptions and Belles-Lettres, in December 1739, on the ſame figure of Oſiris, gilded in a very ſingular manner, and which he had ſeen a ſhort time before, in the poſſeſſion of the Count de Caylus. They had both of them accurately examined the gilding which covered it, and had obſerved, that in order to make the layer of white, to which

* Collection of Antiquities, vol. i. p. 13, 14. See likewiſe the Memoirs of the Academy of Inſcriptions and Belles-Lettres of Paris, vol. xiv. p. 13.

† Philoſophical reſearches reſpecting the Egyptians and Chineſe, vol. i. This pretended rice-ſtraw, if M. Paw is to be credited, is nothing elſe but the ſtalks of millet cut down. *Note at bottom of p.* 138.

the

the gold was applied, adhere to the bronze, the artiſt had firſt overlaid the figure with a good layer of glue, beſprinkled all over with chips of rice-ſtraw.*

On the report of Herodotus, one of the alimentary plants of the ancient Egyptians, was the *olyra*.† There cannot be a greater conformity, unleſs being abſolutely the ſame, between this word and *ozyra*,‡ the name which the Greeks gave to rice, and this conformity ſo ſtriking would be an inconteſtable proof of the antiquity of the culture of rice in Egypt, if Citizen Larcher, whoſe opinion is preponderating on ſuch a ſubject, had not aſſured us, that after a cloſe and accurate examination of a great number of paſſages of the ancients, the *olyra* is not the rice plant, but ſpelt.§ M. Paw had aſſerted that it was the rye,‖ the name of which is totally unknown at this day in Egypt, and which, in all probability, never conſtituted a part of the

* Mem. of the Acad. of Inſcr. and Belles-Lettres, the paſſage above quoted.

† Book ii. § 77.

‡ This cannot be a typographical error, but a miſtake of the Author. The Greek word is ὄρυζα, *oryza*, and not *ozyra*; the fanciful etymological reſemblance of courſe diſappears, and all the learned reaſoning upon it falls to the ground.—H. H.

§ *Triticum ſpelta*. Lin. See Larcher's Tranſlation of Herodotus, book ii. § 77, note 258.

‖ Philoſophical Reſearches, p. 138.

ancient agriculture of that country. But theſe are nothing more than the very luminous conjectures of ſcience: a contradictory fact ſtill maintains it's ground, that of the ſtraw which covered the antique ſtatue of Oſiris, ſo *accurately* examined by Meſſrs. de Caylus and de Boſe.

M. Paw, in the ſame work, wherein paradoxes are no rarities, goes ſtill farther: he inſiſts, that ſuppoſing the ancient Egyptians to have been acquainted with rice, they would have been on their guard againſt the cultivation of it, becauſe, according to him, this ſpecies of culture is ſufficient to generate endemical diſeaſes in a country where it never thunders, at leaſt, very rarely, and where the atmoſphere, impregnated with ſaline ſubſtances which the fire of heaven does not conſume, is very much ſubject to corruption;* nay he inſinuates that this is one of the cauſes of the peſtilence, which he erroneouſly ſuppoſes to be an epidemical diſeaſe in Egypt. What has betrayed M. Paw into this miſtake, for he never ſaw the rice-grounds of Egypt but in his cloſet, is his conſidering them as marſhes, the idea of rice-ground being generally aſſociated with that of a marſh which it is dangerous to ſtir, on account of the exhalations which iſſue from it. But in the vaſt plains of Lower Egypt, beſides that the ſtrong and regular winds would

* Philoſophical Reſearches, p. 89, 90.

purge

purge the atmoſphere of the noxious vapours with which it might be loaded, it is not on marſhy grounds that the rice is raiſed; a ſtagnant and infected water by no means cover the plains in which it is produced; they moiſten it, they bathe it with the water of the river, which all the reſources of art are employed in conveying to it: this water runs off, and they give over ſupplying their conduits with more, as ſoon as the plants ſtand no longer in need of moiſture. Another ſpecies of crop, which does not require ſuch copious refreſhment, and which abſorbs the remains of an exceſſive humidity, ſucceeds to that of rice, and beautiful carpets of verdure aſſume the place of the yellow robe with which, a little before, the ſelf-ſame plains were clothed.

As ſoon as the rice is reaped, the Egyptians ſow a beautiful variety of trefoil, which they call *barſim*.* The ſeed of it is ſcattered over the ſurface of the ground without the labour of ploughing or digging, and it ſinks to a ſufficient depth in a ſoil which, at that period, is ſtill abundantly humid. Fortunate country, where the earth needs not to be painfully torn to open her boſom to fecundity, where it is ſufficient, if I may uſe the expreſſion,

* *Trifolium Alexandrinum*. Forſkal, Flora Egyptiaco-Arabica, p. 139. *Nota*. Some travellers have confounded the *barſim* with the ſainfoin: it is a ſpecies, or rather a variety of our trefoil.

for the huſbandman to indicate the kind of riches which he wiſhes to have, in order to their being laviſhed upon him; where, in a word, nature ſeems to remit to man, who is inceſſantly offering violence to her, all labour and even all acknowledgment! This trefoil yields three ſucceſſive crops, before it again reſigns it's place to the rice: the ſecond of theſe is always more beautiful than the other two, becauſe then the plant has room to ſpread out it's roots, and the ſtalk is no longer cramped by the ſtubble. It is eaſily conceivable how beautiful and brilliant ſuch an alternation of produce muſt be, and which no other country on the globe can diſplay. The *barſim*, green or dried, is the moſt common, and the moſt ſucculent food of the brute creation, whether in paſture, or in the fold. One eſſential quality of this excellent fodder, and which it is more natural to aſcribe to the climate than to difference of ſpecies, is this, that I never ſaw it occaſioned to the animal that ſudden and ſometimes mortal inflation, which our trefoil ſcarcely ever fails to produce, when the animals paſture on it, or eat it newly cut, in too great a quantity, and without mixture.

In ſpeaking of the beſt ſpecies of fodder, an opportunity offers of ſpeaking a few words on the kind of animals moſt valuable to agriculture. The ox is, without controverſy, of all domeſtic animals, the

the one which renders the moſt important ſervices to man. Among a warlike and conquering people, the horſe will be placed in the firſt rank; but that nation will be neither rich nor happy. With a ſage nation, which conſiders agriculture as the real ſource of public proſperity, the ox will have the preference. Behold that horſe ſo ſtately; with what rapidity he ſcours the plain! what agility, what majeſty in all his movements! His eyes ſparkle, his mouth whitens with foam; extended noſtrils ſcarcely leave the paſſage free for a burning and interrupted ſnorting; he ſeems to partake of the ardor of the warrior who had ſubjected him to the bridle. Both the one and the other preſent, no doubt, a very impoſing ſpectacle; but neither the one nor the other is capable of extracting his ſubſiſtence out of the bowels of the earth; it is the fruit of the painful efforts of that poor drudge, whom you perceive in the back-ground, bending oppreſſedly over a plough-ſhare dragged forward by oxen, which modeſtly animate the courage and the conſtancy of labour; he it is who forces the earth, by tearing it aſunder, to yield productions always new; he alone knows how to employ iron in atchieving the only conqueſt which nature avows.

It is well known in what eſtimation oxen were held in ancient Egypt; they furniſhed deities to that ſuperſtitious people; their worſhip was univerſally

ſally diffuſed; many cities had their peculiar divinities of this ſpecies whoſe perſons were ſacred. The celebrity of the ox *Apis* is known all the world over, which became the firſt of this herd of gods: he had his altars; he maintained prieſts; he delivered oracles. No heifer was ever put to death, and the law declared it ſacrilege to dare to eat their fleſh.* They performed funeral obſequies in honour of ordinary oxen when they happened to die; for excepting thoſe which were offered in ſacrifice to the gods, ſcarcely any were killed; it was unlawful to put to death any which had ever worn the yoke; this was a reward of their ſervices, a kind of grateful acknowledgment, far remote from the harſhneſs, from the ferocious ingratitude of moſt of our farmers, toward the laborious animals to which they are indebted for the means of ſubſiſtence; and this harſhneſs and inſenſibility have a much greater influence than is commonly imagined on the public morals. The Egyptian government, in concert with the prieſts, ſupported this religious enthuſiaſm in favour of animals the moſt uſeful to a nation, with whom almoſt all the laws had a reference to agriculture. What attention, what reſpect muſt not have been paid toward the perfecting of a ſpecies every individual of which might pretend to the

* To this very day, the murder of a man or of a calf, is the only crime which the Hindoos puniſh with death. Mackintoſhe's Travels, vol. i. p. 312.

honours

honours of apotheoſis? For if attentions are beſtowed on what we love, ſuperſtition is laviſh of them on what it adores.

To no purpoſe ſhould we look, in the very conſiderable number of oxen actually exiſting in Egypt, for the veſtiges of that perfection of beauty which they muſt have had in ancient times. Though the race of them be ſtill abundantly handſome, it is eaſy to conceive that, having been long neglected, it muſt have greatly degenerated; they have, in general, ſmall horns, and the hair dun-coloured, more or leſs deep, a colour which does not require, in my apprehenſion, a very great effort of the pencil; though Maillet tells us that thoſe "animals "are of ſuch exquiſite beauty, that the pencil is "incapable of repreſenting it."* I can bear witneſs, that in making the complete tour of Egypt, I never met with any one ox which ſtruck me either from it's form or colours. In depicting them as the moſt beautiful in the world, the ſame author would have the oxen of Egypt paſs likewiſe for the beſt of all. "Their fleſh," ſays he, "is admirable; "it does not yield in quality to that of the oxen "of Hungary, nor to any other whatever; nay, it "has this farther excellence, that of being ex-"tremely nutritious.†" This meat, nevertheleſs,

* Deſcription of Egypt, by M. Maillet, in 4to. part ii. p. 27.
† Id. ibid.

is

is far from having the flavour of the beef which we eat in France. The aſſertion of Maillet, falſe in the fact, is likewiſe ſo in the principle. In truth, it contradicts a general obſervation which every traveller has it in his power to aſcertain, namely, that the fleſh of the animals of very hot regions has neither the ſucculence nor the ſavour of that of animals of the ſame ſpecies, fed in cold or temperate climates. Veal which, with us, furniſhes an aliment delicate and wholeſome, has, in Egypt, fleſh flabby, inſipid, and conſequently not very ſalubrious. I have made the ſame remark in the countries of South America, adjacent to the line, and in which the calves, killed at the age when ours are ſent to the butcher, would not be eatable, from the flabbineſs and inſipidity of their fleſh; ſo that till it has had time to acquire ſufficient conſiſtence, they are obliged to let the young animal grow, until ceaſing to be a calf, it would paſs every where elſe for a bullock. Veal is not eaten in Egypt: the laws of the Mahometans prohibit the uſe of that food; and the Cophts, who have adopted almoſt all the cuſtoms of their tyrants, likewiſe abſtain from it.

It has been affirmed that the cows of Egypt produce twins at a birth.* This happens ſometimes,

* Cornelius le Bruyn's Voyage, vol. ii. p. 101, note *n*.—Paul Lucas his Voyage, &c. &c. &c.

no

no doubt; but though leſs rare perhaps than in Europe, this degree of fecundity by no means paſſes for an ordinary thing. It was natural that, after having endeavoured to eſtabliſh the ſuperiority of the Egyptian bull, Maillet ſhould talk in the ſame tone of exaggeration of the cow; accordingly, he was not ſatisfied with allowing her two calves at a birth, and boldly aſſerts that cows have been known to produce four at once.* Such haſty obſervations, which diſgrace a narrative of facts, would undoubtedly have had no place in that of Maillet, if death had allowed him time to digeſt, himſelf, the memoirs which he had collected, and of which the greateſt part belonged to him only becauſe he had been furniſhed with them. I have read a very long one, depoſited in the chancery of France, at Roſſetta, *compoſed for M. Maillet*, by a French merchant reſiding there, and I have found it again, printed at full length, in the work of the conſul. It is very difficult, when a man does not obſerve for himſelf, when he throws together materials ſupplied by a variety of hands, and when he credulouſly admits the relations, almoſt always unfounded, of the people of the country, to avoid falling into a multiplicity of errors.

The oxen, in Egypt, are employed in a very eaſy huſbandry. The induſtry of the inhabitants not

* Deſcription of Egypt, part ii. p. 5.

having

having acquired the art of availing themſelves of the aſſiſtance of water and wind to put in motion their mills and their numerous hydraulic machines, apply to them likewiſe the ſtrength of the ox. Each of the rice-mills, which I lately mentioned, requires forty or fifty of thoſe animals, and this kind of machinery being conſiderably multiplied at Roſſetta and at Damietta, beaſts of this ſort could not but fetch a very high price: they uſually ſold for two hundred and fifty francs each (near ten guineas) an exorbitant valuation in a country where paſture is ſo abundant; diſmal effect of a horrible deſpotiſm; but few pupils are reared, little thought is exerciſed about to-morrow, where it is uncertain whether fortune, whether exiſtence itſelf ſhall exiſt another day.

Oxen in the yoke have their head at liberty: the yoke or the lever, fixed by a leathern ſtrap, reſts on the laſt vertebræ of the neck, ſo that the ſtrain is made by the exertion of the ſhoulders. This method is in general uſe all over Turkey, and it appears to me exceedingly commodious: the animal is more at it's eaſe, has more force and ſpeed, than when it is in the fatiguing and extremely aukward attitude of pulling by the head. It is to this method we muſt aſcribe the thickneſs of the withers, which the oxen of Egypt have more elevated

elevated than thoſe of our European countries. It is poſſible, at the ſame time, that this may be a natural ſwell, and that, on this account, they may be conſidered as approaching to the biſon, or hump-backed ox.*

* *Bos ferus.* Lin.

CHAP.

CHAP. XV.

Inhabitants of Roſſetta — Pipes — Coffee-houſes— Arabian tales—Manner of making the coffee— Shameful vices of the Egyptians—Wives of the rich—Converſation by ſigns with one of them— Particulars reſpecting thoſe women—Jealouſy of the men—Homage paid to women.

AFTER the eye has wandered with delight over a portion of the brilliant agriculture of Egypt, it is reluctantly brought back to the interior of cities. There, it is the picture of fertile and generous nature; here, we are preſented with the ſacrilegious efforts, to contradict and violate her, of men incapable of reliſhing, of enjoying her beauties. There, ſenſations the gentleſt and the moſt pure follow each other in rapid ſucceſſion, and deliciouſly fill the feeling ſoul. Here, the mind is ſhocked at the hideous aſpect of the vices which domineer in a ſociety equally degenerate and corrupted. But I have engaged to preſent, without diſguiſe, my obſervations of every kind, and thoſe which have a reference to the manners of the exiſting Egyptians ought to find a place in a general deſcription.

Roſſetta

Roſſetta not having, like Alexandria, an immediate communication with the ſea, you do not find it ſwarming with thoſe multitudes of foreigners, of adventurers, of dangerous men, whoſe agitation, tumult, and uproar are their element, and which render a reſidence, at the city laſt named, ſo very diſagreeable. Remote from the buſtle of ſea-ports, and from the frequent political convulſions of Cairo, it's inhabitants were abundantly peaceable. Not that the European was there ſecured entirely from inſult: he had, at times, diſagreeable circumſtances to encounter, but they were ſlight in compariſon with thoſe which perſecuted him at Alexandria, and which abſolutely oppreſſed him at Cairo. The ſilly and ridiculous pride which perſuades the Mahometans that they alone of mankind are adopted by the Deity, that they are the only perſons to whom he ought to open his boſom, a pride which the doctors of the law or the prieſts, the vaineſt and moſt intolerant of all men, took great care to foment, was the principal ſource of thoſe unpleaſant attacks. The Turk deſcribes the European by no other epithet than that of *infidel*; the Egyptian Muſſulman, ſtill coarſer, treats him merely as a *dog*. With him, *chriſtian* and *dog* were two terms ſo exactly ſynonimous, and in ſuch frequent uſe, that no attention was paid to the difference, and that they were indiſcriminately employed by perſons who had no intention to offer an

inſult. Europeans, in the uſual dreſs of their own country, were likewiſe expoſed, at Roſſetta, to be hooted at, in the more populous quarters of the town, and to be purſued with repeated ſhouts of *nouzrani*, *nazarene*. The Jews likewiſe underwent there thoſe petty perſecutions, and, though ſtationary inhabitants of the country, were much worſe treated in it than the Chriſtians of Europe. But that nation is compoſed of degraded individuals, and deſerves to be deſpiſed, inaſmuch as inſenſible to contempt, to the diſgrace accumulated on them by wave upon wave, they ſuffered themſelves, if I may uſe the expreſſion, to be deluged with it, provided you left them the facility of glutting their vile and inſatiable thirſt of gold. Habited in the oriental ſtyle, they were obliged, in Egypt, to wear a head-dreſs, and to be ſhod, in a peculiar and appropriate manner; but what principally diſtinguiſhed them, was the tufts of hair, or of beard, which they were forced to let grow, and to keep up, cloſe by the ear, on both ſides of the face. Moſt of the merchants were Turks or Syrians; there were ſome likewiſe from Barbary. The Cophts, that degenerate race, deſcended from the ancient Egyptians, reſided there in conſiderable numbers. Some Arabs too were domeſticated in that city, and the plains adjacent were inhabited and cultivated by the *fellahs*; a term which, in Egypt, conveys an idea of contempt, as in ancient times that of

peaſant

peaſant was with us, to which it correſponds, when the intention is to expreſs rude vulgarity and groſs ignorance. The chief command was entruſted to an officer of the Mamelucs, to whom they gave the title of *Aga*.

The moſt ordinary paſtime here, as well as all over Turkey, is to ſmoke and drink coffee. The pipe is never from the mouth from morning to night: at home, in the houſes of others, in the ſtreets, on horſeback, the lighted pipe is ſtill in hand, and the tobacco-pouch hangs always at the girdle. Theſe conſtitute two great objects of luxury; the purſes which ſerve to contain the proviſion, are of ſilken ſtuffs richly embroidered, and the tubes of the pipes, of an exceſſive length, are of the rareſt, and, for the moſt part, of the ſweeteſt ſcented wood. I brought home one made of the jaſmine-tree, which is more than ſix feet long: it may convey an idea of the beauty of the jaſmines of thoſe countries, ſeeing they puſh out branches, of that length, ſtraight, and ſufficiently large to admit of being bored. The pipes of more common wood are covered with a robe of ſilk tied with threads of gold. The poor, with whom the ſmoke of tobacco is a neceſſary of firſt rate importance, make uſe of ſimple tubes of reed. The top of the pipe is garniſhed with a ſpecies of mock alabaſter, and white as milk: it is frequently enriched with

precious ſtones. Among perſons leſs opulent, the place of this is ſupplied by faucets. What goes into the mouth is a morſel of yellow amber, the mild and ſweet ſavour of which, when it is heated or lightly preſſed, contributes toward correcting the pungent flavour of the tobacco. To the other extremity of thoſe tubes are adapted very handſome cups of baked clay, and which are commonly denominated the *nuts of the pipes*. Some of them are marbled with various colours, and plated over with gold-leaf. You find them of various ſizes: thoſe in moſt general uſe through Egypt are more capacious; they are, at the ſame time, of greater diſtention. Almoſt all of them are imported from Turkey, and the reddiſh clay of which they are formed is found in the environs of Conſtantinople. There was a Turk at Roſſetta who excelled in this ſpecies of manufacture. I took great pleaſure ſometimes to look over him while at work: a great diverſity of ſmall ſharp-pointed tools ſerved him to impreſs, with exquiſite delicacy, various deſigns on the clay in it's ſtate of ſoftneſs; but the proceſs was long and tedious: his pipe-nuts accordingly ſold very dear. I had ſome from him which coſt me ſo high as ſix franks (five ſhillings) a piece. Some of them were covered with a capital pierced full of holes, in form of a perfuming pan. This Turk, who had lived a good deal at Conſtantinople, was not deſtitute of addreſs; his ſhop was the

reſort

reſ[illegible]of the moſt conſiderable perſonages of Roſ-ſetta; he was a great friend to the French, and he employed his credit to procure for me the means of travelling comfortably through Lower Egypt.

It is difficult for Frenchmen, eſpecially for thoſe who are not in the habit of ſcorching their mouth with our ſhort pipes and ſtrong tobacco, to conceive the poſſibility of ſmoking all day long. Firſt, the Turkiſh tobacco is the beſt and the mildeſt in the world; it has nothing of that ſharpneſs which, in European countries, provokes a continual diſpoſition to ſpit; next, the length of the tube into which the ſmoke aſcends, the odoriferous quality of the wood of which it is made, the amber tip which goes into the mouth, the wood of aloës with which the tobacco is perfumed, contribute more towards it's mildneſs, and to render the ſmoke of it totally inoffenſive in their apartments. The beautiful women, accordingly, take pleaſure in amuſing their vacant time, by preſſing the amber with their roſy lips, and in gently reſpiring the fumes of the tobacco of Syria, embalmed with thoſe of aloës. It is not neceſſary, beſides, to draw up the ſmoke with a ſtrong ſuction; it aſcends almoſt ſpontaneouſly. They put the pipe aſide, they chat, they look about, from time to time they apply it to the lips, and gently inhale the ſmoke, which immediately makes it's eſcape from the half-

opened mouth. Sometimes they amuſe themſelves by ſending it through the noſe: at other times they take a full mouthful, and artfully blow it out on the extended palm, where it forms a ſpiral column, which it takes a few inſtants to evaporate. The glands are not pricked, and the throat and breaſt are not parched by an inceſſant diſcharge of ſaliva, with which the floors of our ſmokers are inundated. They feel no inclination to ſpit, and that affection, ſo cuſtomary with us, is, in the Eaſt, conſidered as a piece of indecency in the preſence of perſons entitled to ſuperior reſpect: it is, in like manner, looked upon as highly unpolite to wipe the noſe while they are by.

The Orientaliſts, who are not under the neceſſity of labouring, remain almoſt always in a ſitting poſture, with their legs croſſed under them; they never walk, unleſs they are obliged to do ſo; and do not ſtir from one place to another, without a particular object to put them in motion. If they have an inclination to enjoy the coolneſs of an orchard, or the purling of a ſtream, the moment they reach their mark they ſit down. They have no idea of taking a walk, except on horſeback, for they are very fond of this exerciſe. It is a great curioſity to obſerve their looks, as they contemplate an European walking backward and forward, in his chamber, or in the open air, re-treading continually the

ſelf-

ſelf-ſame ſteps which he had trodden before. It is impoſſible for them to comprehend the meaning of that going and coming, without any apparent object, and which they conſider as an act of folly. The more ſenſible among them conceive it to be a preſcription of our phyſicians that ſets us a-walking about in this manner, in order to take an exerciſe neceſſary to the cure of ſome diſorder. The negroes, in Africa, have a ſimilar idea of this practice, and I have ſeen the ſavages of South America laugh at it heartily among themſelves. It is peculiar to thinking men; and this agitation of the body participates of that of the mind, as a kind of relief to it's extreme tenſion. Hence it comes to paſs that all thoſe nations, whoſe head is empty, whoſe ideas are contracted, whoſe mind is neither employed, nor ſuſceptible of meditation, have no need of ſuch a relaxation, of ſuch a diverſion of thought, with them, immobility of body is a ſymptom of the inert ſtate of the brain.

Thoſe who are oppreſſed by want of employment, and this is the heritage of the rich, retire to the gardens, of which I have preſented a ſketch, and, evermore ſeated, delight themſelves with breathing a cool and balſamic air, or in liſtening to wretched muſic. If they do not chooſe to go out of town, they repair to one of the coffee-

houſes, of which we ſhould form a very erroneous idea, in judging of them by our own. It is a mere tobacco-ſmoking rendezvous, totally deſtitute of decoration, and in which nothing abſolutely is to be found, except coffee and a live-coal to light the pipes. Mats are ſpread for the company, and theſe places of reſort are frequented by the men of all nations who reſide in Egypt. There is nothing that deſerves the name of converſation: a few words only drop occaſionally. The Turk is cold and taciturn; he looks down on every other nation with diſdain. The African is leſs diſpoſed to ſilence, but likes to follow the example of the Turk, and thoſe who are not Muſſulmans, take no pains to ſhun the appearance of a ſervile ſubjection to the taſte of their tyrants. With the pipe in one hand, a cup of coffee in the other, they ſlowly waſh down, every four or five whiffs of tobacco, with a gulp of coffee. Dancing girls, buffoons, extempore declaimers come to tender their ſervices, and to earn a bit of money. There is ſcarcely one of thoſe haunts but what attracts to it ſome ſtory-teller by profeſſion, who is never tired with talking, nor his auditors of liſtening to him. The narrations of thoſe indefatigable orators are, for the moſt part, very inſipid and tireſome. The Arabian writers, however, from whom their ſtories are borrowed, ſometimes furniſh them with ſome that are excellent.

excellent. Such is the one that follows, which I committed to memory, becauſe it is ſhort and poignant.

"A Turk had repeated to his wife a ſermon de-
"livered by the Iman of his moſque. The prieſt
"had been declaiming on the ſacredneſs and the
"obligations of wedlock. All thoſe, ſaid he, who
"acquit themſelves of their duties early in the
"night, perform a work as meritorious as if they
"ſacrificed a ſheep. Thoſe who, in the middle of
"the night, render a ſecond tribute, do as much
"in the eyes of the gods, as if they ſacrificed a
"camel. Thoſe, finally, who, at ſun-riſing, ren-
"der a third homage to the ſanctity of their union,
"merit as much as if they had ranſomed a ſlave.
"The wife, deeply concerned about her huſband's
"ſalvation, ſays to him, as the evening approached:
"My friend, let us ſacrifice a ſheep; and the
"ſheep was ſacrificed. At midnight the Turk was
"awaked; come, my friend, ſaid ſhe, let us ſa-
"crifice a camel; this ſacrifice too was offered up.
"Scarcely had the day begun to dawn, when the
"fervent Muſſulman-lady admoniſhed her ſpouſe
"that the moment was come for ranſoming a ſlave;
"when turning towards her, with outſtretched
"arms: Alas! my dear ſoul, ſaid he, it is I who
"am thy ſlave; I conjure thee ſet me at liberty."

If

If a perſon be ever ſo little known, he can ſcarcely paſs through a ſtreet without being invited in, and requeſted to drink coffee. This expreſſion of politeneſs is to ſuch a degree a matter of habit, that thoſe who do not poſſeſs a ſingle grain of coffee, ſuch as the gardeners of Roſſetta, never fail to make an offer of it, though you would embarraſs them exceedingly by accepting it. They do not make uſe of utenſils of iron for roaſting the beans of the coffee plant: it is in an earthen veſſel that this operation is performed. They afterwards pound them in a mortar of earthen-ware or wood, which preſerves their perfume much better, than by reducing them to powder in a mill. The vicinity of Arabia renders it perfectly eaſy to provide themſelves with the excellent coffee which it produces. In the opinion of delicate palates, forty beans are little enough to make one cup fit for drinking; and no where do you meet with it ſo highly flavoured. They do not ſuffer it to ſtand ſtill a moment. When it has boiled three times over the fire, and drawing off ſucceſſively, and at each boiling, a coffee-pot full with a long handful, they pour it into cups, and though it be not quite clear, there is no reaſon to regret the want of ſugar, which it is not the cuſtom at this place to mix with it.

I ſhall

I ſhall not undertake to delineate all the other uſages which the Egyptians have in common with other Mahometans. Theſe details belong more properly to the hiſtory of Turkey, and would carry me too far. I ſhall ſatisfy myſelf with mentioning ſuch as I have more particularly obſerved.

If the inhabitants of Roſſetta are leſs barbarous than thoſe of the other parts of Egypt, they are not for that leſs ignorant, leſs ſuperſtitious, nor leſs intolerant. We find among them, though with ſhades ſomewhat ſoftened, the ſame harſhneſs of character, the ſame implacable averſion to the nations of Europe, the ſame propenſity to revenge; in a word, the ſame perfidy, and they abandon themſelves to the ſame deteſtable vices. The paſſion contrary to nature which the Thracian dames avenged by the maſſacre of Orpheus, who had rendered himſelf odious by gratifying it,* the inconceivable appetite which diſhonoured the Greeks and Perſians of antiquity, conſtitute the delight, or, to uſe a juſter term, the infamy of the Egyptians. It is not for the women that their amorous ditties are compoſed: it is not on them that tender careſſes are laviſhed; far different objects inflame them. Senſual pleaſure with them has nothing amiable, and their tranſports are merely paroxyſms

* *Ille etiam Thracum populis fuit auctor, amorem*
In teneros transferre mares. OVID.

of

of brutality. This horrid depravation which, to the diſgrace of poliſhed nations, is not altogether unknown to them, is generally diffuſed over Egypt: the rich and the poor are equally infected with it; contrary to the effect which it produces in colder countries, that of being excluſive, it is there aſſociated with the love of women. After having glutted his favourite and criminal inclination, the man of thoſe countries retires to his *harem*, and there burns a few grains of incenſe in honour of nature, to whom he has juſt been offering a horrid outrage; and with what worſhip, ſpirit of love, does he honour her! Abominable ſacrificer, he knows nothing of thoſe gentle reciprocations of affection, of that delicious oblivion, of thoſe ardent tranſports of two ſouls which underſtand each other, and cleave to each other: no delicacy in the acceſſories, no decency of arrangement, nothing graceful in the details; all is brutal, every thing wants animation, every thing is reſtricted to phyſical propenſity the moſt diſguſting.

The outrages which the Egyptians offer to nature do not ſtop there: other beings beſides partake of their horrible favours, and their wives are frequently in competition with the beaſts of the field, and poſtponed to them. The crime of beſtiality is familiar to thoſe monſters under a human form; they avow it with the moſt impu-

dent

dent effrontery, and wretches have been ſeen abandoning themſelves to it, at Roſſetta, in open day, in the more retired ſtreets.

But let an impenetrable curtain drop over ſcenes ſo ſhocking, and let us penetrate into the retreats where beauty languiſhes, where, like the flower which the careſſes of the zephyr abandon, and reſign to the blighting breath of the impetuous ſouth wind, deprived of the homage of ſenſibility, it withers and waſtes under the yoke of a jealous barbarian, who torments her with his ſuſpicions, and pollutes her with his profaned touch.

The wives of the maſters of Egypt, of the other Mamelucs, of the Turks ſettled in the country, of the rich inhabitants of the cities, were not Egyptian women: they were originally from other countries of the Eaſt, and particularly from the parts of Greece, in which beauty is a valuable and conſtant property.

Perpetually ſecluded, and going abroad very rarely, and under a veil, or to expreſs myſelf more accurately, under a maſk, with which the face is completely covered, the ſun can impreſs no blemiſh on the freſhneſs, on the colouring of their complexion; and an acrid and ſaline air can never affect the fairneſs and the delicacy of their ſkin. And

for

for whom are ſo many charms ſo carefully preſerved? For one ſingle man, for a tyrant who holds them in captivity. An inſuperable line of ſeparation is drawn, in thoſe countries, between the two conſtituent halves of the human ſpecies: the one, the graces of which form a contraſt ſo agreeable with the force, and the maſculine beauties of the other, a priſoner here, becomes the excluſive poſſeſſion of a few individuals. No man can enter the place where the women are, the proprietor himſelf excepted; no one muſt behold their face. No where is jealouſy carried to ſuch a horrid exceſs; no where is it more ferocious. An inevitable death awaits the ſtranger who ſhall have made an attempt to introduce himſelf into the apartments reſerved for the females, or to addreſs a few words to them, on meeting them out of doors. Not that thoſe beautiful captives have no diſpoſition to burſt aſunder ſome links of their chain, and certain adventures have come to my knowledge, of which they had been frankly at the whole of the expenſe. But ſuch inſtances of good luck were extremely hazardous, and aſſignations of this ſort were kept with much anxiety and trepidation.

During my firſt reſidence at Cairo, I one day ſurprized, without intending it, a young Frenchman, who, behind the half-drawn curtains of a lattice in the conſul's houſe was buſily employed in making a variety

a variety of ſigns; I came up to him, and aſked whether there might not be ſome indiſcretion in witneſſing a converſation which appeared to me extremely animated, though not a ſingle word was articulated. He readily admitted the truth of my remark. He was on the point of leaving Cairo, and beſides, he could attach no intereſt but that of ſingularity, to the knowledge of a female, of whom he had ſcarcely a half view, and with whom he could have no communication but at the diſtance of more than ſixty feet. I diſtinguiſhed, through a grating of wood, the figure of a woman who lodged on the oppoſite ſide of the *kaliſch*, or canal of Cairo. She returned the Frenchman's ſigns, and theſe ſilent interviews were repeated ſeveral times a day, at hours agreed upon. I did not fail to make one of them, without being ſeen by the lady. I learnt the art of ſignals which, in a country where it is impoſſible to ſpeak to women, is a very expreſſive language, and I myſelf was ſoon in a condition to be a very tolerable telegraph. The young man, obliged to take his departure with the conſul, had taken his laſt farewel of the lady. Left alone in the houſe, I preſented myſelf to ſupply his place. I ſignified that, being a Frenchman like the other, I came to expreſs the ſame ſentiments, and to tender the ſame homage. Soon tired of peeping through the cloſe bars of a contracted window-blind, and of addreſſing my vows only to a beauty

a beauty which might be altogether imaginary, I requeſted that it might be diſplayed in all the luſtre of unclouded day. Difficulties were ſtarted; I perſiſted, and was promiſed that toward the evening the lady would aſcend to the terrace of the houſe. I got up to my own, and perceived an elegantly dreſſed female appear, but ſtill at the diſtance of threeſcore feet, and ſtill wearing her veil. This was even worſe than the panes of her croſs-barred lattice, through which I ſaw at leaſt an interſected figure. I entreated her, in the moſt importunate of attitudes, that this impertinent veil might diſappear. A black ſlave who attended her miſtreſs, joined her entreaties to my ſupplications: all was to no purpoſe. The laſt favour which ſuch a woman can beſtow, is to diſplay her perſon; and, from an unaccountable notion of modeſty, ſhe would rather exhibit her whole figure than uncover her face. The next day I renewed my ſolicitations, and they were crowned with ſome ſucceſs. After many difficulties, the officious negreſs, who was in her miſtreſſes's ſecrets, tore aſide the veil, and I beheld a female young and beautiful. The carnation of ſhame diffuſed over her countenance a very vivid colouring, which gradually faded, till nothing remained but the roſes of beauty. From that moment, the moſt perfect liberty directed our mute converſations. I had received the higheſt poſſible token of benevolence. My beautiful neighbour

gave

gave me to underſtand, that her huſband, who was an old Turkey merchant, intended to go a long journey in a ſhort time, and ſhe engaged me to cultivate a cloſer intimacy, by paſſing over to her houſe. She pointed out to me a little door that opened toward the canal, and which was never employed as an entrance but for the purpoſe of fetching water from it. The black ſlave was to wait for me when the night ſhut in, and introduce me in perfect ſafety. She informed me that, in order to reach this door, I had only to croſs the breadth of the canal, at that time perfectly dry; and ſhe ſwore by her head, a French woman would have ſaid by her heart, that I did not run the ſlighteſt riſk. I became difficult in my turn. The fearful conſequences with which ſuch a ſtep might be followed were, in my eyes, a barrier, which the moſt amiable and ingenuous advances, which aſſurances the moſt affectionate could not determine me to ſurmount. Several evenings paſſed away in this ſpecies of conflict, between the eloquent, though not uttered, invitations of a tender deſire, and the reſiſtance of prudence frequently but feebly oppoſed. But we had been detected: our interviews by means of ſignals, had excited the indignation of certain Mahometans, and the diſcharge of a muſket, from one of the adjacent terraces, and the ball of which whizzed cloſe by my ear, gave me notice that it was high time to terminate thoſe ſteril en-

counters, and made me ſenſible how well adviſed I had been in not having croſſed the canal.

Theſe ſame women frequently viſit each other. Decency and reſerve do not always defray the expenſe of their converſations. The abſolute want of education and of principle: the idleneſs and abundance in which they ſoftly paſs their days; the conſtraint in which they are unremittingly kept, by men extremely unacquainted with delicacy either of ſentiment or in conduct; the aſſurance which they have that the inclinations of theſe men are directed towards other objects; the vivacity of their affections; the climate which communicates it's fires to hearts ſo fruitleſsly diſpoſed to tenderneſs; nature, whoſe powerful voice, too frequently miſunderſtood by thoſe whom ſhe calls to partake of her laws as well as of her pleaſures, rouſes their ſenſations; every thing contributes to direct their vivid imagination, their deſires, their diſcourſe toward an object which they are not at liberty to attain. They amuſe themſelves in their little parties with completely changing clothes, and in mutually aſſuming each other's dreſs. This ſpecies of metamorphoſis only ſerves as a prelude and a pretext to ſports leſs innocent, and of which Sappho paſſes for having taught and practiſed the details. Intelligent in the art of amuſing, and not of extinguiſhing the ardor which conſumes them, the ſame diſorder

diſorder purſues them ſtill into ſolitude; ſad reſources, miſerable indemnifications of a privation, which, under a temperature equally warm and dry, and to ſouls all on fire, appears no eaſy matter to ſupport.

The men are well aware of theſe diſpoſitions, and their jealouſy is offended at it. Not only do they bar all acceſs to the apartments of the women to every other man; for that name is not to be given to the mutilated beings, who have the figure only; but they do not permit the introduction of even inanimate objects which might favour illuſion. They know not what it is to repoſe confidence in the diſcretion of a wife; they are not afraid to make ſure that thoſe who, under their roof, paſs for the moſt reſerved, may not let ſlip opportunities of becoming unfaithful, nor find the means of ſatisfying their temperament. The monſters! They have the preſumption to talk of fidelity, their mouth dares to pollute, by pronouncing it, the name of honour! Unfaithful to nature, whom they ſerve only by outraging her, they carry their impudence ſo far as to pretend to the moſt deſirable favours of her faireſt workmanſhip! They perceive not, wretches as they are, that the infidelities of which they complain, are the well-merited recompenſe of their own contemptuous behaviour, of their rigour, and of their criminal and diſguſting caprices! Let them open, if

they can, their heart to a delicate love, their ſoul to the ſanctity of friendſhip, to the confidence which it commands, to the kind attentions which it keeps alive, and they will ſee whether that ſex, which they calumniate, becauſe they know it only by the horrible and ponderous chains of iron with which they load it, knows how to correſpond to ſentiments of honour, and whether it is not itſelf the precious ſanctuary of affections the moſt tender, and of the conſtancy which perpetuates them in that ſacred abode.*

* It will be aſked, perhaps, how it was poſſible for me to procure information of what paſſes in the interior of *Harems*, ſeeing acceſs to them is ſo ſeverely guarded: the means which I employed are ſimple; but I muſt be permitted to refrain from diſcloſing them: it is ſufficient to be aſſured of the truth and exactneſs of the details; and on this the reader may fully depend.

CHAP. XVI.

Wives of the commonalty—Black of the eyes—Alquifoux—Red of the hands and of the feet—Henna—Depilatories—Plumpneſs of the women, their cleanlineſs, their coſmetics.

WHEREVER an exceſſive luxury is concentrated in a privileged claſs in the cities, indigence, and all the horrors which follow in it's train, are the heritage of the moſt numerous claſs, and the deſolation of the plains. It would betray great ignorance of the ſtate of women in Egypt, to imagine that they are all endowed with the ſame charms, that they enjoy the ſame delicate accommodations of life, as the beautiful foreign dames of whom I have been juſt ſpeaking, and who, ſimilar to exotic flowers, whoſe luſtre is to be preſerved only by attention and management, live ſolely in the employment of prolonging the duration of the gifts derived from nature, and of adorning them by the richneſs of art. The women of the lower order, inſtead of that whiteneſs, of that delicate colouring with which the complexion of the firſt is animated, have, like the men of the ſame country, a tawny ſkin, and as the males of the ſame order, they wear the impreſs and the tatters of frightful poverty.

poverty. Almoſt all of them, eſpecially in the country, have no other clothing but a ſpecies of large tunic with ſleeves, extremely wide, and which ſerves at once for gown and ſhift; it is open on both ſides from the arm-pit down to the knee, ſo that the movements of the body are eaſily ſeen through the apertures; but women there are little concerned about that, provided the face is not expoſed to view.

It is not ſufficient for opulent and idle women to be adorned with ſo many natural charms, they muſt beſides endeavour to increaſe and ſet off beauty by the aſſiſtance of the arts of the toilette, which is likewiſe with them an object of ſuperior importance. But this art conſiſts entirely in ancient and invariable uſages: faſhion never deranges the uniformity of their practices, never involves them in caprice upon caprice; and if ancient and unchanging modes be a proof of ſlight advancement toward perfection, may it not likewiſe be affirmed, that a reſtleſs verſatility in faſhion is a ſymptom of degeneracy in thoſe whom it torments?

The moſt remarkable trait of beauty, in the Eaſt, is large black eyes, and it is well known that nature has made this a characteriſtic ſign of the women of thoſe countries. But, not content with theſe gifts of nature, thoſe of Egypt employ every effort of

of art to make their eyes appear larger and blacker. For this purpoſe, females of every deſcription, Mahometan, Jew, Chriſtian, rich and poor, all tinge the eye-brows and the eye-laſhes with black lead,* known, in the commerce of the Levant, by the name of *alquifoux* or *arquifoux*. They reduce it to a ſubtile powder, to which they give conſiſtency by mixing it with the fuliginous vapour of a lamp. The more opulent employ the fumes of amber, or of ſome other fat and odoriferous ſubſtance, and have the drug always prepared, at hand, in ſmall phials. With this compoſition they themſelves paint the eye-brows and eye-lids, and with a ſmall morſel of wood, of reed, or of feather, they likewiſe blacken the laſhes with it, by paſſing it with a light hand between the two eye-lids; an operation which the Roman ladies practiſed of old, and which Juvenal has deſcribed with ſo much exactitude.† They beſides mark with it the angles of the eye, which makes the fiſſure appear greater.

The ebony of thoſe eyes ſo black contraſts agreeably with the dazzling white of the ſkin of the beautiful Circaſſian women, and imparts vivacity to their complexion: but this oppoſition of colour

* Mine de plomb teſſulaire. *Galena teſſulata.*

† *Illa ſupercilium, modicâ fuligine tactum*
Obliquâ producit acu, pingitque, trementes
Attollens oculos.

produces the moſt agreeable effect at a little diſtance; cloſe up to it the layer of paint is too apparent, and it even impreſſes on the phyſionomy a ſhade of gloomineſs which has ſomething harſh in it.

The French merchants of Cairo had large conſignments of alquiſoux. Part was conſumed in the country, by the beautiful eyes of the women; but by far the greateſt quantity was exported to Arabia and the land of Yemen, where it was employed as a varniſh for pottery. They pretended that what they had from England was of a ſuperior quality to any other: but this branch of commerce produced only very moderate returns.

If large black eyes, which they are at pains to darken ſtill more, be eſſential to Egyptian female beauty, it likewiſe requires as an acceſſory of firſt-rate importance, that the hands and nails ſhould be dyed red. This laſt faſhion is fully as general as the other, and not to conform to it would be reckoned indecent. The women could no more diſpenſe with this daubing than with their clothes. Of whatever condition, of whatever religion they may be, all employ the ſame means to acquire this ſpecies of ornament, which the empire of faſhion alone could perpetuate, for it aſſuredly ſpoils fine hands much more than it decorates them. The animated whiteneſs of the palm of the hand, the tender

tender roſe colour of the nails, are effaced by a dingy layer of a reddiſh or orange-coloured drug. The ſole of the foot, the epidermis of which is not hardened by long or frequent walking, and which daily friction makes ſtill thinner, is likewiſe loaded with the ſame colour.

It is with the greeniſh powder of the dried leaves of the *henna*, that the women procure for themſelves a decoration ſo whimſical. It is prepared chiefly in the Saïd, from whence it is diſtributed over all the cities of Egypt. The markets are conſtantly ſupplied with it, as a commodity of habitual and indiſpenſable uſe. They dilute it in water, and rub the ſoft paſte it makes on the parts which they mean to colour: they are wrapped up in linen, and at the end of two or three hours the orange hue is ſtrongly impreſſed on them. Though the women waſh both hands and feet ſeveral times a day, with lukewarm water and ſoap, this colour adheres for a long time, and it is ſufficient to renew it about every fifteen days. That of the nails laſts much longer, nay it paſſes for ineffaceable. In Turkey, likewiſe, the women make uſe of *henna*, but apply it to the nails only, and leave to their hands and feet the colours of nature. It would appear that the cuſtom of dying the nails was known to the ancient Egyptians, for thoſe of mummies are, moſt commonly,

commonly, of a reddiſh hue.* But the Egyptian ladies refine ſtill further on the general practice: they too paint their fingers, ſpace by ſpace only, and, in order that the colour may not lay hold of the whole, they wrap them round with thread at the propoſed diſtances, before the application of the colour-giving paſte, ſo that when the operation is finiſhed, they have the fingers marked circularly, from end to end, with ſmall orange-coloured belts. Others, and this practice is more common among certain Syrian dames, have a mind that their hands ſhould preſent the ſufficiently diſagreeable mixture of black and white. The belts which the *henna* had firſt reddened, become of a ſhining black, by rubbing them with a compoſition of ſal-ammoniac, lime and honey.

You ſometimes meet with men likewiſe who apply tincture of *henna* to their beards, and anoint the head with it. They alledge that it ſtrengthens the organs, that it prevents the falling off of the hair† and beard, and baniſhes vermin.

The *henna* is a tall ſhrub, endleſsly multiplied in Egypt. The leaves are of a lengthened oval form,

* See Memoir on Embalment by M. de Caylus, in the Mem. of the Acad. of Inſcr. and Bel. Let. vol. xxiii. p. 133.

† The followers of Mahomet, it is well known, preſerve, on the crown of the head, a long tuft of hair.

oppoſed

oppoſed to each other, and of a faint green colour. The flowers grow at the extremity of the branches in long and tufted bouquets, the ſmaller ramifications which ſupport them are red, and likewiſe oppoſite: from their arm-pit cavity ſprings a ſmall leaf almoſt round, but terminating in a point. The corolla is formed of four petals curling up, and of a light yellow. Between each petal are two white ſtamina with a yellow ſummit; there is only one white piſtil. The pedicle, reddiſh at it's iſſuing from the bough, dies away into a faint green. The calix is cut into four pieces, of a tender green up toward their extremity, which is reddiſh. The fruit or berry is a green capſule previous to it's maturity; it aſſumes a red tint as it ripens, and becomes brown when it is dried: it is divided into four compartments, in which are encloſed the ſeeds triangular and brown coloured. The bark of the ſtem and of the branches is of a deep gray, and the wood has, internally, a light caſt of yellow.

This ſhrub had at firſt been conſidered as a ſpecies of privet,* to which it has, in truth, many relations; but differences in the parts of fructification, have determined botaniſts to make a diſtinct genus of it, to which Linnæus has give the name of *lawſonia*, and, to the ſpecies in queſtion, that of

* *Liguſtrum vulgare*. Lin.

lawſonia-

*lawſonia-inermis.** It's Arabic name is *henné*, or *hanna*; and with the article *elhenne*, or *elhanna*; in Turkey they call it *kanna*, or *alkanna*. Though it's figure has been already publiſhed in ſeveral books on natural hiſtory,† it has not been faithfully repreſented in any one, or with ſuch exactneſs of detail, as in the drawing which I had taken of it at Roſſetta. See plate IV., in which the different parts of the ſhrub are accurately copied after nature.

Miller cultivated the *henna* in England, where it was neceſſary to keep it conſtantly in the hot-houſe. It does not yet make part of the rich and magnificent collection of living plants in the national garden of France. But the ſcientific exertions of the learned gentlemen who are partaking of the glory of the aſtoniſhing expedition to Egypt, will not delay, undoubtedly, to rank, among the number of the triumphs which a grateful country ſhall owe them, that of a charming and uſeful plant. More happily ſituated than England, the French Republic will be able, perhaps, to embelliſh one

* *Lawſonia-inermis, foliis ſubſeſſilibus ovatis, utrinque acutis.* Lin. Octandr. monogyn.—*Lawſonia ſpinoſa, alhenna.* Haſſelq. Voyage to the Levant. N. B. That the epithet of *ſpinoſa* is by no means applicable to the *henna*, for it has no thorns.—*Lawſonia inermis.* Forſk. Flora Egyptiaco-Arabica.

† Walt. hort. 3, t. 5.—Rhead. Malab. 4, t. 57.—Rauwolf. Itin. t. 60.—Bellon. edit. Cluſ. p. 135. &c. &c.

day

Henné a Plant.

A. *Flowers.* B. *Flower, natural size.* C. *Bough laden with berries.*
D. *Seed, natural size.* E. *Leaf, natural size.*

Publiſhed by I. Stockdale.

day the agriculture of her ſouthern departments with it, and add this branch of commerce to all thoſe with which ſhe is already enriched.

In truth, this is one of the plants the moſt grateful to both the ſight and the ſmell. The gently deepiſh colour of it's bark, the light green of it's foliage, the ſoftened mixture of white and yellow, with which the flowers, collected into long cluſters like the lilach, are coloured, the red tint of the ramifications which ſupport them, form a combination of the moſt agreeable effect. Theſe flowers, whoſe ſhades are ſo delicate, diffuſe around the ſweeteſt odours, and embalm the gardens and the apartments which they embelliſh. They accordingly form the uſual noſegay of beauty. The women, ornament of the priſons of jealouſy, whereas they might be that of a whole country, take pleaſure to deck themſelves with theſe beautiful cluſters of fragrance, to adorn their apartments with them, to carry them to the bath, to hold them in their hand, in a word, to perfume their boſom with them. They attach to this poſſeſſion, which the mildneſs of the climate, and the facility of culture, ſeldom refuſe them, a value ſo high, that they would willingly appropriate it excluſively to themſelves, and that they ſuffer with impatience Chriſtian women and Jeweſſes to partake of it with them. The victim of tyranny, beauty, in thoſe countries,

countries, has likewiſe then it's deſpotiſm! But it has nothing in it harſh nor maleficent: it's caprices are amiable; it bears only on flowers.

A remarkable ſingularity is, that the perfume which the flowers of the henna exhales, ceaſes to be agreeable when you ſmell to it very cloſe: it is then almoſt entirely abſorbed by a very decided ſpermatic odour. On cruſhing ſome of thoſe flowers between the fingers, this laſt odour predominates: it is then indeed the only one perceptible. This particularity is a ſource of inſipid pleaſantries to the *wits* of the country, and the property aſcribed to the *henna* of procuring abortion, renders them inexhauſtible. They extract from thoſe ſame flowers a perfumed water, which ſupplies their place during the ſhort ſpace which they themſelves diſappear. As to the numerous medicinal virtues which the different parts of the plant are ſaid to poſſeſs, nothing certain has hitherto been eſtabliſhed by experiment. Several authors have made the enumeration, and I ſatisfy myſelf with referring to them.*

But the uſeful and admitted properties of the *henna* are not limited to objects of pleaſure or

* Vide Proſp. Alpin. de Plantis Egyp. cap. 13.—Ejuſdem, de Medicam. Egy. lib. 4. cap. 1.—Boutii notas in Garciam ab horto, in cap. 3. lib. 2. &c. &c.

of

of faſhion. The arts too derive manifold advantages from the powder of it's leaves. It is eaſily conceivable that a ſubſtance which it furniſhes, with ſo much facility, a colour adherent, durable, and which may, according to the mixture with other ingredients, be extended from yellow to the moſt lively red, cannot fail to ſupply ample reſources to the dyer. It will probably come in time, and perhaps ſoon, to increaſe thoſe of France, where it's uſe is not known, and where the ſkill of our artiſts will turn it to all the good account of which it is ſuſceptible. It formed, in behalf of Egypt, a branch of commerce far from inconſiderable. Fourteen or fifteen ſhips were loaded annually, at Alexandria, with theſe leaves reduced to powder, and exported to Smyrna, to Conſtantinople, to Salonica, from whence they found their way over ſeveral countries of the north, and among the reſt, I have been told, into Germany; they are employed there in the dying of furs, and in the preparation of leathers.

The *henna* grows in great quantities in the vicinity of Roſſetta, and conſtitutes one of the principal ornaments of the beautiful gardens which ſurround that city. It's root, which penetrates to a great depth with the utmoſt eaſe, ſwells to a large ſize in a ſoil, ſoft, rich, mixed with ſand, and ſuch as every huſbandman would wiſh to have to work upon;

upon; the ſhrub of courſe acquires a more vigorous growth there than any where elſe, it is at the ſame time more extenſively multiplied: it grows however in all the other cultivated diſtricts of Egypt, and principally in the upper part.

There is much reaſon to preſume that the *henna* of Egypt is the *kupros* of the ancient Greeks. The deſcriptions, incomplete it is admitted, which authors have given of it, and particularly the form and the ſweet perfume of its flowers which they have celebrated, leave ſcarce any doubt reſpecting the identity of theſe two plants.* Beſides that, the cluſters of *cyprus*, *botrus cypri*, of the ſong of ſongs,† can be nothing elſe but the very cluſters of the flowers of the *henna*. This is at leaſt the opinion of the beſt commentators. Conſult Scheuchner's Sacred Phyſics, vol. i. p. 198; Junius and a hoſt of interpreters.

It is not at all aſtoniſhing that a flower ſo delicious ſhould have furniſhed to oriental poëſy agreeable alluſions and amorous compariſons. This furniſhes an anſwer to part of the 45th queſtion of

* The name of *kupros* is no longer in uſe among the modern Greeks; they give to the *henna* the corrupted denominations of *kéné*, *kna*, &c. The ſeamen of Provence, whoſe veſſels were employed in the carriage of the powder of *henna*, called it quêné.

† Chap. i. v. 13, 14. *Botrus cypri dilectus meus mihi, in vineis Engaddi.*

Michaëlis,

Michaëlis,* for the flower of *henna* is diſpoſed in cluſters, and the women of Egypt, who dearly love the ſmell of it, are fond of carrying it, as I have ſaid, in the ſpot which the text indicates, in their boſom.† But it is not ſo eaſy to ſolve the difficulty which perplexed Michaëlis, when he afterwards calls for an explanation of the words which follow: in the vineyards of En-gedi,‡ and what relation have the bunches of cypreſs with vineyards? For my part, I know of none, unleſs it be that it's flowers have, from their diſpoſition, a reſemblance to thoſe of the vine.

One of the things which the love of ſelf, and the deſire of pleaſing others, makes moſt in requeſt with the women of Egypt, is to have the ſkin ſoft and ſmooth all the body over, without ſuffering the ſlighteſt appearance of roughneſs to remain. The parts veiled by nature loſe with them their umbrage, and the whole is equally ſmooth and po-

* "What can be the meaning, in the amorous ſtyle, of the "cluſters of the cypreſs, Cant. i. 14? He cannot be ſpeaking "of the leaves, the powder of which ſerves as a dying-drug to "the orientaliſts, but of the flowers. Did the women of thoſe "countries carry them in form of noſegays in the place which "the text indicates?" *(Intelligent and Curious Travellers, &c. by Michaëlis, vol. i. queſt.* 45. *p.* 172.

† *Inter ubera*, v. 13.

‡ *In vineis Engaddi*, ibid. and Michaëlis, the place formerly quoted.

liſhed. It is a known fact, that the diſciples of Mahomet are in the habit of diveſting themſelves of every covering of hair: the very men, with whom muſtachios are an ornament, and a long beard a diſtinctive ſign, reject every excreſcence of this kind on any other part of the body, and the inhabitants of Egypt, of whatever deſcription, have adopted the ſame taſte. In former times, the prieſt alone ſhaved the whole body every third day, in order, ſays Herodotus, that no vermin, nor filth of any kind, ſhould be generated on men devoted to the ſervice of the gods.* In modern times, every Egyptian ſhaves himſelf in like manner, and they are not much the leſs for that preyed on by vermin. The generality only make uſe of the razor for this operation, which they frequently repeat. Others, as in Turkey, employ a depilatory which the Turks call *ruſma*, and the Arabians *nouret*, a very ordinary drug, and which is ſold for a trifle. It is not, as has been believed, a mineral ſubſtance, found in a ſtate of complete preparation, as a depilatory, in the bowels of the earth. It ſtands in need of an artificial preparation, and of an alloy, in order to attain the requiſite property. In truth, Bellonius, the firſt who has deſcribed (at Cuta, in Galatia) *the ſource of a mineral which they call ruſma*,† adds, that the mineral alone cannot

* Herodotus, Larcher's tranſlation, book ii. § 3.

† Obſerv. book iii. ch. 33.

anſwer

anſwer the purpoſe, *till after they have reduced it to a very ſubtile powder, mixing half as much quick-lime as ruſma, they dilute it in ſome veſſel with water.** Thus, the *ruſma* of Bellonius does not furniſh a depilatory by itſelf, and it contains ſome cauſtic ſubſtance, which, mixed with lime, communicates that property to it. And this preſumption is confirmed by the experiment of Citizen Valmont de Bomare, who, having received from Conſtantinople ſome ſmall morſels of mineral *ruſma*, perceived that, when thrown on burning coals, a vapour immediately exhaled from it, which led him to ſuſpect that it is a *calchitis* mineralized by ſulphur and arſenic.† The ſame naturaliſt ſays farther, that this depilatory is very rare in France, and ſold there for it's weight in gold. But how is it poſſible to reconcile this ſcarcity, this high price, with the abundance of *ruſma* in Turkey? How could a thing ſo common have remained unknown till now? It is preſented in all the bathing-houſes, and it would have been eaſy for Frenchmen who, in the great ports of the Levant, take pleaſure in frequenting them, to have procured ſome of it to ſend into France. But it was that, conformably to the obſervation of Bellonius, ill underſtood, and altered in many works on the materia medica, they would not ſee the *ruſma* in a preparation, and that

* Obſerv. book iii. ch. 33.

† Dict. of Nat. Hiſt. artic. *Ruſma.*

they were always looking for it in the mineral, *an ore extracted from the earth and ſlightly burnt*, of which Bellonius has made mention, without attending that a few lines below he ſubjoins, that it needs to be mixed with lime, in order to produce the effect expected.

This mixture is the real *ruſma* of the Turks; and, as I have juſt ſaid, the Arabs give it the name of *nouret*, a word which, according to the Turkiſh dictionary, is of Perſic extraction. It is certain that the *ruſma* and the *nouret*, are the ſame ſubſtance, or rather the ſame compoſition; and if you conſult the ſame Turkiſh dictionary, under the words *nuré* and *nuret*,* you will ſee that they give this name to a depilatory, compoſed of chalk and arſenic.

It is, in truth, with arſenic or orpiment,† mixed with quick-lime,‡ that they prepare in the baths of Egypt, the drug which makes the hair fall off. The proportion is ſeven parts lime to three of orpiment. When they mean to apply it, they find it neceſſary to retire to a very warm place, ſuch as the ſtove-baths of the Eaſt, in which a copious perſpiration

* Theſaurus linguarum Orientalium, &c. Aut. Meninſki. Vienna, 1680.

† In Arabic, *zernich*.

‡ In Arabic, *guir*.

diſtils

diſtils from all parts of the body. They dilute the mixture with water, and rub it gently on the part to be depilated. A few moments after, they try if the hair is detaching itſelf; they then take it off without feeling any pain, and waſh in warm water. Care muſt be taken not to let the paſte remain too long, otherwiſe it would burn the ſkin. This does not prevent the hair from growing again, and, after ſome time, it is found requiſite to repeat the operation.

The women, and, at preſent, I am ſpeaking only of ſuch as are married, for young women keep themſelves as nature made them, and it is not till the very day of marriage that they are pitileſsly ſtripped of the veil of nature; the women, I ſay, jealous of diffuſing over their whole perſon an exact and uniform poliſh, employ neither raſor nor *nouret*, which leave after them veſtiges offenſive to the touch, which it is their great ſolicitude to prevent. Nothing can reſiſt an extreme deſire to appear perfectly beautiful. They ſubmit to a painful operation, to a violent and total deracination, which is performed by an application of honey made into a paſte with turpentine, or ſome ſort of gum; and when this plaſter is become dry, it is torn off with all that adheres to it. Fortunately there is no need to return often to this rather ſevere proceſs. If a reproduction appears, it is only a ſoft down,

like the fineſt wool; and, after a few years, vegetation of this ſort is abſolutely deſtroyed. Should nature commit a miſtake in giving, to any of thoſe females, a beard on the face, they uſe the ſame recipe to make it diſappear, beyond the poſſibility of returning.

Next to the deſire of having the ſkin ſoft, and of the moſt beautiful poliſh, the great anxiety of thoſe ladies is to acquire as great a degree of plumpneſs as poſſible. The taſte of the men does not incline them to ſlim and taper ſhapes, to elegant and limber forms; they love women that are fat, and they accordingly employ every effort to become ſo. In order to attain this high degree, this perfection of beauty, they make uſe of various drugs, as the nuts of the cocoa-tree, the bulbs of the hermodactyl,* raſped down and mingled with ſugar. They never fail, after lying-in, to eat plentifully of this laſt ſpecies of paſte or comfit, in the perſuaſion that it is the ſureſt means of recruiting their ſtrength, and of regaining the fleſh they have loſt.

The idea of a very fat woman is almoſt always aſſociated in Europe with that of ſoftneſs of fleſh, of the flattening of forms, of defect in the elaſti-

* In Arabic, *chamire*. The greateſt part of it, conſumed in Egypt, comes from Arabia. It grows likewiſe in ſufficient abundance in the vicinity of Aboukir.

city

city of the contours. It would be a miſtake to think this is a repreſentation of the women of Turkey, in general, where they all endeavour to get into fleſh. It is, in the firſt place, indubitably certain that the women of the Eaſt, more favoured of nature, preſerve longer than others their firmneſs of fleſh; and that attractive property, added to the ſoftneſs, to the fairneſs of their ſkin, to the freſhneſs of their carnation, render them very agreeable, very deſirable maſſes, when their embonpoint is not carried to exceſs.

Moreover, there is no country in the world where the women carry farther an attention to cleanlineſs, than in thoſe countries of the Eaſt. The frequent bathings, the perfumes, the employment of every art that can ſoften and embelliſh the ſkin, to preſerve all their charms, nothing is neglected, and the moſt minute details ſucceed each other with a ſcrupulous exactneſs. Such pains are not thrown away. Women are no where more conſtantly beautiful; no where is the talent of ſeconding nature better underſtood; no where, in a word, are women more ſkilled, nor more practiſed in the art of retarding and of repairing the ravages of time; an art which has it's principles and practices innumerable. I amuſed myſelf with making a collection of them, not only in Egypt, but likewiſe in

Greece, where I reſided a conſiderable time, and enjoyed very particular opportunities of completing my collection. Certain European ladies have ſometimes courted me to open it in their favour: but I check myſelf; this is not the place for making ſuch communications, and the book of a traveller ought not to degenerate into a courſe of coſmetics.

CHAP. XVII.

Egyptian dogs—Cats—Beautiful animal of this genus reared by the Author—Domeſtic animals—Mangouſte, or ichneumon—Species of tortoiſe of the Nile, hoſtile to the crocodile.

AMIDST the population of Roſſetta, there exiſts a horde of animals which, repelled by man, to whoſe perſonal uſe nature ſeems to have deſtined them, are nevertheleſs incapable of deſerting him; and, as it were in defiance of his unkindneſs, perſiſt in rendering him ſervice. In all ages, and among all civilized nations, the dog has merited, if I may preſume to ſay ſo, to enter into alliance with mankind. Savages themſelves, who ſcarcely live in ſociety with each other, rear the canine race, and ſhare with them the labours and the fruits of the chaſe. From a ridiculous prejudice, the offspring of a religion ſtill more ridiculous, the Mahometans alone hold this animal in abhorrence. With them he is an unclean beaſt, which they will not admit into their houſes, which they carefully ſhun, and which they dare not touch, under pain of becoming themſelves unclean. Hence a judgment may be formed of the full import of the

the term *dog* which they beſtow on the nations of Europe. Very different in this, as well as in every other reſpect, from the ancient Egyptians, who rendered a particular worſhip, and the higheſt honours, among other animals, to the moſt ſagacious of all, to that one whoſe excellent qualities make him moſt worthy of human attentions.*

From one of thoſe inconceivable contradictions, prevalent particularly among Muſſulmans, there are few cities in the world which contain ſo many dogs as thoſe of Egypt, or, at leaſt, there is no one which has the appearance of containing more, becauſe they are there conſtantly aſſembled in the ſtreets, their only habitation. There they have no other ſupplies of food but what they can pick up at the doors of houſes, or ſcramble for by raking into filth and garbage. The females drop their young at the corner of ſome retired and unfrequented ſtreet; for a diſciple of Mahomet would not permit them to approach his habitation. Continually expoſed to the cruel treatment of the populace; maſſacred ſometimes, without mercy, by an armed mob; ſubjected to all the inclemency of the elements, hardly finding the means of ſupporting a wretched exiſtence; meagre, irritated to madneſs, frequently eaten up of a mange which degenerates

* The worſhip of the dog was univerſally diffuſed over Egypt.

ſometimes

ſometimes into a ſpecies of leproſy, hideous even from the forlornneſs of their condition, thoſe miſerable animals inſpire as much compaſſion, as they excite contempt and indignation againſt the barbarians among whom they live.

It is undoubtedly aſtoniſhing, that amidſt a life of miſery and ſuffering, many of thoſe dogs ſhould not be ſubject to attacks of the hydrophobia. But this malady, rare in the northern parts of Turkey, is ſtill more ſo in the ſouthern provinces of that empire, and is totally unknown under the burning ſky of Egypt. I never ſaw a ſingle inſtance of it; and the natives whom I have conſulted on the ſubject, had not ſo much as an idea of the diſeaſe. It would appear, nevertheleſs, that madneſs has not always been a ſtranger in this country, ſince, according to the hieroglyphics of Orus-Apollo,* quoted by M. Paw, the perſons employed in embalming the ſacred dogs, when thoſe animals had died of the hydrophobia, contracted a particular malady.† The ſame author remarks, it is true, that accidents of this ſort were not very common. It may likewiſe be poſſible, that the paſſage from Orus-Apollo might admit of another interpretation. Be this as it may, it is very certain that at preſent

* Book i. chap. 381.

† Philoſophical reſearches reſpecting the Egyptians and Chineſe, vol. ii. p. 112.

in

in Egypt,* as well as in other parts of Africa, and in the hotteſt zone of America, dogs are never attacked with the canine madneſs. So that obſervation contradicts a plauſible preſumption, and apparently founded on natural principles, namely, that madneſs muſt prevail in proportion to the intenſity of the heat, a propoſition contradicted by facts, and they will throw, perhaps, ſome light on the nature of this cruel malady, and on the method of curing it.

The dogs of Egypt are a race of tall greyhounds, which would be very beautiful, were they cared for, or if they were only leſs cruelly treated. In loſing the elegance of their forms, they ought to have, one would think, no longer the ſame impreſs of the qualities which, every where elſe, render them ſo recommendable. Nevertheleſs their inſtinct, though perhaps impaired, is by no means extinguiſhed. You ſee them going and coming through the moſt frequented ſtreets, and ſhunning to touch the

* "M. Lecointre, who reſided in Egypt, aſſures us that, in "this country, the hydrophobia never appeared, and that at "Aleppo, where there is a prodigious multitude of dogs of "different ſpecies, roving about, abandoned to themſelves, and "without a maſter; that there, where thoſe animals periſh in "great numbers, for want of water and food, and by the heat "of the climate, the hydrophobia never was ſeen." (Mem. on the means of curing the hydrophobia, by M. de Mathéis, inſerted in the Biblioth.-Phyſico-Econom. A. D. 1784. p. 216.)

clothes

clothes of the paſſengers, with an attention truly curious, and much more intereſting than the ſolicitude of the ſilly Muſſulman to keep the ſkirt of his robe out of the animals' way. They even keep watch for the ſecurity of their executioners; they are the terror of thieves in the night time; on the quays, in boats, in the woods, and in the interior of cities, all kinds of merchandize are confided to their vigilance. An admirable inſtinct, a native propenſity to be uſeful to man, excites them to undertake an overſight which no one impoſes on them, nor ſo much as indicates to them, and it would be impoſſible to approach a depoſite ſurrounded by thoſe ſpontaneous guardians. But what is no leſs ſingular is, that thoſe dogs do not remove from the quarter in which they were born; they form themſelves into ſeparate tribes, which have limits that they never tranſgreſs; one that ſhould paſs from one quarter to another, would be preſently aſſaulted by the whole cohort, in reſpect of which he would be an intruder, and could with difficulty eſcape.

The Bedouins who, at all points, are leſs ſuperſtitious than the Turks, have a breed of very tall greyhounds, which likewiſe mount guard around their tents; but they take great care of theſe uſeful ſervants, and have ſuch an affection for them, that to kill the dog of a Bedouin would be to endanger your own life.

With

With an averſion as decided as it is unjuſt for a ſpecies of animals which, in deſpair of imitating him, man has conſtituted the ſymbol of an unalterable fidelity and attachment, the Turks have a great partiality in favour of cats. Mahomet was fond of them. It is related of him, that being called away on preſſing and important buſineſs, he choſe rather to cut off the ſleeve of his robe, than diſturb a cat which lay aſleep on it. Nothing more was neceſſary to render theſe animals an object of very high conſideration, though their extreme cleanlineſs, the purity and luſtre of their fur, their ſoft tranquillity, their calm and reſerved careſſes, had not otherwiſe rendered them amiable beings in the eyes of the Muſſulmans. The cat accordingly is not excluded from their moſques; ſhe is welcomed there as the favourite animal of the prophet, and as the enemy of other troubleſome animals; whereas a dog that ſhould preſume to enter into their temples, would pollute them by his preſence, and incur inſtant death. But obliged to flee from men, to whom he would deſire to conſecrate his domeſtic qualities, and the perfection of his inſtinct, no dog is tempted to reſort to the places where men aſſemble; he would then have neither maſter to follow, nor friend to accompany.

In ancient Egypt cats were held in great veneration, but dogs were ſtill more ſo. When a cat died

died in a houſe, a natural death, (for if any one killed a cat, though involuntarily, he could not eſcape death) the owner of the houſe ſhaved his eyebrows only; but if a dog died, he ſhaved his head and the whole body.* They carried into conſecrated houſes the cats which happened to die, and after having embalmed them, interred them at Bubaſtis,† a conſiderable city of Lower Egypt, now called *Baſta*.

Theſe honours, theſe prerogatives were not a matter of taſte merely; they had a grand political object in view, the intereſt, nay the very ſubſiſtence of a whole people. It was neceſſary to put under the immediate protection of the laws, a ſpecies of animals, whoſe protection was itſelf indiſpenſable, againſt the prodigious multitudes of rats and mice, with which Egypt is infeſted. Apotheoſis appeared, to the prieſts, the ſureſt means for procuring reſpect from the people for objects which they had the greateſt intereſt to preſerve. What difference, in fact, does it make, in the caſe of idolatrous religions, whether you worſhip a man or a cat, a woman or an onion? Are they not all at an equal diſtance from the Deity? Since men will be ſuperſtitious, is it not beſt that they ſhould be uſefully ſo? Happy the nations whoſe ſuperſtition tends to-

* Herodotus, book ii. § 6. Larcher's tranſlation.
† Id. ibid. § 67.

ward

ward the improvement of agriculture, and the furtherance of the general good!

With a nation, for which phyſical objects are all in all, and morals next to nothing, the ſeductive exterior of the cat appeared preferable to the docility, to the exquiſite inſtinct, to the ſagacious fidelity of the dog. A ſingle trait of this kind frequently characterizes a nation much better, than an aggregation of obſervations reſpecting cuſtoms and practices, which ſoon become things of courſe, which, in proceſs of time, are conſidered as totally indifferent, and which at length we like as well to obſerve, as to take the trouble to change. Is not, in reality, a judgement ſoon formed of a people, when we know that they have the dog in abhorrence, and entertain an affection for the cat, becauſe this laſt carefully conceals her excrement, and does not devour the offal of the layſtalls, on which the dog's natural appetite ſometimes leads him to find a meal?

There are cats in all the houſes of Egypt. You ſee ſome of them, in the manſions of the rich, partaking of the cuſhions, the indulgence and the indolence of their maſters, who take pleaſure in ſtroking them with the hand, and in laviſhing careſſes on them, which thoſe cold and haughty beings would not deign to beſtow on creatures poſſeſſed

of

of infinitely more ſenſibility. In a word, ſhort of deification, as in the time of the ancients, it is impoſſible for them to be better treated.

The cats in this country, it is true, are very gentle, and very familiar. They have no diſtruſt of man, the ferocious character which, in ſome parts of France, render them a race of animals rather wild than domeſtic. But, theſe differences are as much the work of man as the effect of the influence of climate. In the department where I live, and in thoſe adjacent, the cat, eſpecially in the country, is the moſt miſerable of beings; next to the horſes ſet apart to huſbandry. Maſters and ſervants agree in hunting the cat, in beating her, in pelting her with ſtones, in worrying her to death by the dogs, after having almoſt ſtarved her to death. If hunger, which her leanneſs clearly witneſſes, incites her to ſpy the moment for ſtealing a little morſel, the pretended thief, becauſe nature would not ſuffer her to let herſelf die of abſolute inanition, pays, with her life, the addreſs ſhe had employed to ſupport it. How is it poſſible that cats ſhould not aſſume, under the diſcipline of ſuch maſters, whoſe cruelty to animals borders on barbarity, a wildneſs of phyſionomy, an impreſs of ferociouſneſs? And if you compare thoſe wretched cats of my country, with ſuch as are entertained at Paris, where, more kindly treated, and ſheltered

from perpetual alarm, they are of an amiable familiarity, you will have a new proof of the influence which the character of man exercises over that of the brute creation.

I had in my possession, for a long time, a most beautiful Angora cat.* Long and silky hairs covered it entirely; it's thick tail formed a magnificent plume, which the animal elevated, at pleasure, above it's body. Not one spot, not one shade tarnished the dazzling white of it's coat. It's nose, and the turn of it's lips were of a tender rose colour. Two large eyes sparkled in it's rounded head, the one of which was a light yellow, and the other blue. This beautiful cat had still more of amability than of grace in it's movements and in it's attitudes. With the physionomy of goodness, she possessed a gentleness truly interesting. You might treat her in what manner you pleased, never did her claws advance from their sheaths. Sensible to kindness, she licked the hand that caressed her, even that which

* The custom of speaking of cats of Angola for Angora, is not yet abolished. It is even to be found in some of the modern works of science. Open the Encyclopedia Methodica, at the article kakatoës, and you will see that one of these yellow-crested birds took delight in playing with an *Angola* cat. Angola is upon the western coast of Africa, and *Angora* is in Asia Minor, not far from Smyrna. It is there that are found those animals with long hair, from which are manufactured our beautiful camlets.

tormented

tormented her. On a journey, ſhe repoſed tranquilly on your knees, there was no occaſion to confine her; no noiſe whatever gave her the leaſt diſturbance, provided ſhe was near me, or to ſome other perſon whom ſhe had been in the habit of ſeeing. In my ſolitary moments, ſhe adhered to my ſide, interrupted me frequently in the midſt of my labours or my meditations, by little careſſes extremely affecting: ſhe likewiſe followed me in my walks. During my abſence, ſhe ſought and called for me inceſſantly with the utmoſt inquietude, and if I was long in re-appearing, ſhe quitted my apartment, and attached herſelf to the perſon of the houſe, for whom, next to me, ſhe entertained the greateſt affection. She recognized my voice, and ſeemed to find me again, each time, with increaſed ſatisfaction. Her advances were not oblique, her gait was frank, and her look as gentle as her character: ſhe poſſeſſed, in a word, the nature of the moſt amiable dog, beneath the brilliant fur of a cat.

This animal was my principal amuſement for ſeveral years. How was the expreſſion of it's attachment depicted upon it's countenance! How many times have her tender careſſes made me forget my troubles, and conſoled me in my misfortunes! How frequently has a being, of a ſpecies accuſed of treachery, preſented in my abode a

ſtriking contraſt with a crowd of real traitors, who, under the maſk of friendſhip, beſiege the houſe of the honeſt man, that they may the better deceive him; with thoſe vipers whom my breaſt has ſo frequently warmed to be as frequently ſtung by them! For the misfortune of humanity the life of the wicked man is long. Theſe execrable wretches, whoſe names my pen ſhould trace, were it not reſerved for the juſtice of Heaven to ſignalize them out for the ſtroke of it's thunder, are ſtill in the vigour of life, in the commiſſion of crimes with unreſtrained audaciouſneſs; and my beautiful and intereſting companion periſhed. After ſeveral days of ſuffering, during which I never forſook her, her eyes, conſtantly fixed on me, were at length extinguiſhed.....My tears flowed.....They flow at this moment.....Feeling hearts will pardon me this digreſſion of ſorrow and of gratitude. Thoſe which are hardened with ſelf-love and inſenſibility give me no uneaſineſs: it is not for them I write.

The warm climates of theſe ancient countries, which man has covered with his colonies and his flocks, from periods too deeply enveloped in the obſcurity of a far diſtant era to be aſcertained with any preciſion, nouriſh animals the moſt gentle and docile, of thoſe kinds which he has appropriated to himſelf, whilſt thoſe which, in the depopulated parts

parts of theſe very countries, have continued wild, are extremely ferocious. Domeſtic animals are no where more familiariſed, and, I may ſay, more completely domeſticated than in the warm countries of the Eaſt. The horſe, ardent as the air which he reſpires, is there, nevertheleſs, as gentle as a lamb. The buffalo, ſcarcely recovered from his ſtate of ſavage liberty, diſplaying ſtill the countenance of ferocity, is as tractable as the ox is in Europe. He quietly permits himſelf to be mounted and led along, and a child is ſufficient to conduct numerous flocks of them. It is not in the nature of the ſoil and of the aliments, nor even in the temperature of the climate, that we muſt ſeek for the reaſon of that gentleneſs of character, which is not to be found elſewhere. It is not here, in fact, a want of energy, nor a natural indolence, ſuch as has been obſerved in thoſe animals which inhabit the very warm, but, at the ſame time, extremely humid regions of ſouthern America. Each ſpecies is endowed with all the fire, with all the ſtrength, with all the vigour of which it is ſuſceptible.

But it is the man of theſe countries who, after having acquired the poſſeſſion of thoſe uſeful animals, has underſtood how to derive the greateſt advantage from this conqueſt. That part of the Eaſt has been, at every period, the abode of wandering nations, who, poſſeſſing no other property but their

flocks, had no other care but that of preſerving them. They do not baniſh them to places detached from their own habitations; they permit them to live in the midſt of themſelves; they do not deſpiſe nor abandon them, and they conduct them wherever their own erratic mode of life prompts. Without folds to encloſe their charge, they have no occaſion for ſhackles to confine them. The dromedary, paſturing at liberty through the day, at night comes to ſquat himſelf before his maſter's tent; and this ſame tent ſhelters the Bedouin and his family, as well as his mare, a few goats, and ſome ſheep. Nothing ſeparates them; they paſs in this manner the nights together, without confuſion, without accident, and in the moſt perfect tranquillity. It is not ſurpriſing that animals, which form with man a ſociety ſo intimate, ſhould be the tameſt in the world; and as they are Bedouins, or people reſembling Bedouins, who have ſupplied, and are daily ſupplying other nations, eſtabliſhed in the ſame country, with them, it is no longer ſurpriſing that you obſerve there, in general, gentle and peaceable habits in all the domeſtic animals.

An animal that might augment the number of thoſe which the Egyptians have accuſtomed to domeſticity, is the mangouſte, or ichneumon.* Much

* Mangouſte. Buffon, Hiſt. Nat. des Quadrupedes. *Viverra ichneumon.* Lin.

has

has been written concerning it, and much of this writing has been fabulous. It was one of the animals held ſacred in ancient Egypt. Honours were rendered to it on it's death; it was maintained with the greateſt ſolicitude during life; funds were ſet apart for it's ſupport, as well as to that of other ſpecies; they ſerved up to him, as to cats, bread ſteeped in milk, or fiſh of the Nile cut down into morſels;* and it was generally forbidden to kill any of the race. Object of the worſhip of a celebrated people, the pretended protector of the moſt ſingular country in the world, againſt a ſcourge the moſt grievous to an agricultural nation, a ſtranger and unknown in our climates. What a field for the production of the marvellous! Accordingly it has not been ſpared. The greater part of travellers have ſeen the mangouſte without examining it; and with their minds, prejudiced by the ſtories which the ancients and the moderns have ſpread reſpecting it, they have ſucceſſively copied their relations. It was reſerved for the torch of criticiſm, guided by the genius of Buffon, to diſſipate a multitude of errors which obſcured natural hiſtory in general, and that of the mangouſte in particular.† I ſhall not repeat here what may be

† See the notes upon the tranſlation of Herodotus, by Larcher, ſect. 65 and 67.

* See the Natural Hiſt. of Quad. Animals. Art. of the *Mangouſte*.

read with infinitely greater pleaſure in the work of the ſublime painter of nature. But as I had it in my power to obſerve the mangouſte in it's native country, and in it's ſtate of liberty, I will give the analyſis of my remarks upon this quadruped, and I will endeavour to eſtabliſh the opinion which ought to be formed of it's utility, by reducing to their juſt eſtimate ſervices which have been much boaſted of, and ſtill more exaggerated.*

With very great diſpoſitions to familiarity, the mangouſtes are not altogether domeſtic in Egypt. Not only do they now rear none in their habitations, but the inhabitants have not even the recollection that their anceſtors reared any. Moſt probably, then, thoſe which Bellonius† and Proſper Alpinus‡ aſſert that they had ſeen domeſticated, were merely a few individuals preſerved rather as objects of curioſity than for any uſeful purpoſe; for if they hunt away rats and mice, they likewiſe ſeize upon the poultry, and this appetite would more than overbalance the good which they could do, in purging the houſes of noxious animals, which cats would deſtroy more certainly, and with leſs inconvenience.

* Theſe remarks on the *mangouſte*, or *ichneumon* of *Egypt*, have been already printed in the *Journal de Phyſique*, for the month of May, 1785.

† Obſerv. liv. ii. chap. 22.

‡ *Deſcrip. d' Egypte*. lib. iv.

Having

Having ſome reſemblance, in their habits, to weaſels and pole-cats, they feed upon rats, birds, and reptiles. They ramble about the habitations of men, they even ſteal into them, in order to ſurpriſe the poultry, and to devour their eggs. It is this natural fondneſs for eggs, which prompts them frequently to ſcratch up the ſand with the intention of diſcovering thoſe which the crocodiles depoſit there, and it is in this manner that they prevent, in reality, the exceſſive propagation of theſe deteſtable animals. But it is abſolutely impoſſible to abſtain from laughing, and not without reaſon, when we read of their leaping into the extended mouths of the crocodiles, of their ſliding down into their belly, and not returning till they have eaten through their entrails.* If ſome mangouſtes have been ſeen ſpringing with fury on little crocodiles preſented to them,† it was the effect of their appetite for every ſpecies of reptiles, and not at all that of a particular hatred, or of a law of nature, in virtue of which they would have been ſpecially commiſſioned to check the multiplication of thoſe amphibious animals, as many people have imagined.‡ It had

* See almoſt all the ancient authors, and, among the moderns, Maillet, Jauna, and others.

† Maillet, Deſcrip. de l'Egypte, partie ii. page 34.

‡ Maillet, in the part already quoted. See likewiſe the Hiſtory of Cyprus, of Jeruſalem, and of Egypt, by the Chevalier Dom. Jauna, vol. ii. Preſent State of Egypt, page 1230. And obſerve

had been at leaſt equally reaſonable to ſay that nature placed mangouſtes on the earth merely to prevent the too great propagation of chickens, to which they are far more hoſtile, in reality, than to crocodiles.

And what proves more clearly that men have been miſtaken in aſcribing ſuch intentions to nature reſpecting mangouſtes, is this, in more than half of the northern part of Egypt, that is to ſay, in that part compriſed between the Mediterranean ſea and the city of Siout, they are very common, although there are no crocodiles there; whilſt they are more rare in Upper Egypt, where the crocodiles are, in their turn, more numerous. The mangouſtes are no where more multiplied than in Lower Egypt, which, better cultivated, more inhabited, more humid, and more ſhaded, preſents alſo more abundantly the means of ſupplying them with prey and with food, and, I again repeat it, crocodiles never appear there.

I will do away on this ſubject an error which would not be of the ſlighteſt importance, in the

obſerve that this laſt gentleman, in almoſt every thing the faithful copyiſt of Maillet, has on this ſubject refined upon his model, by adding other fables, which Maillet rejected with diſdain. It is in this manner that people frequently contrive to write immenſe quartos.

writings

writings of a traveller of leſs reputation than Dr. Shaw: this will be a proof, in addition to many others, of the diſtruſt and the diſcernment neceſſary when you viſit foreign countries, on every occaſion, when not having it in your power to make your own obſervations, you believe that you may give credit to information too frequently defective. "The Egyptians," ſays Mr. Shaw, "are ſo little "acquainted with the real crocodile, which they "call *timſah*, and which it is ſo unuſual to find be-"low the cataracts of the Nile, that the Egyptians "are not leſs curious to ſee one than the Euro-"peans."* Dr. Shaw, who was no further than Cairo, has adopted too eaſily an aſſertion contrary to truth, as well as to the teſtimonies of the travellers who preceded him. If he had received more accurate information, he would have learnt that Upper Egypt, below the cataracts, is infeſted with crocodiles as real as they are multiplied.

The antipathy to the crocodile, improperly attributed to the mangouſte, is really an innate inſtinct in an animal of a totally different ſpecies; in this has happened what may have frequently paſſed before our eyes, in more than one inſtance; whilſt they were giving to the mangouſte the credit of maintaining a continual and deſperate war againſt the crocodiles, a ſpecies of tortoiſe of the Nile was

* Tranſl. of the Travels of Dr. Shaw, vol. ii. page 167.

levelling

levelling at them more certain, though, at the ſame time, leſs ſkilful blows, and laboured with ſucceſs for their deſtruction. When the little crocodiles are hatched, and repair to the river, this tortoiſe ſprings on them, and devours them. Maillet was not ignorant of this fact, but he did not think proper to give his report concerning it from the teſtimony of the people of the country, although preferable when it regards facts ſo generally known. "I "know," writes this conſul, "that ſome perſons "pretend that this animal (the ichneumon) is mere-"ly a ſpecies of whitiſh tortoiſe, which the Arabs "call *cerſé*" (it is, *thirſé*, the generic name of tortoiſes in Arabic.) "They tell you that, by a natural "inſtinct, the narrowly watches the crocodile when "ſhe goes to lay her eggs, and to bury them in the "ſand; and that as ſoon as the crocodile with-"draws, ſhe goes to find them out, in order to break "and eat them...But without mentioning the figure "which Dapper has given us of the ichneumon, "which in no one reſpect reſembles the tortoiſe, the "numerous repreſentations in ſtone of this animal "which ſtill remain to us, and ſeveral of which "are accompanied with hieroglyphical characters, "leave no room to doubt that this can only be "what is called *Pharaoh's* rat." (This is only ſaying that we muſt not doubt the exiſtence of the ichneumon, or mangouſte, which no one diſputes.) "This," continues he, "is a ſpecies of wild pig,

"very

" very pretty, and eaſily tamed, the hair of which is " briſtled like a porcupine."* Thus is this rat transformed into a little pig, &c. &c.; it muſt be admitted that ſuch authorities as theſe have very little weight in natural hiſtory.

This ſpecies of tortoiſe is to be found only in the upper Nile, to which crocodiles are confined. To convey an idea of the advantage with which this *thirsé* of the Egyptians and Nubians wages war with the crocodile, I ſhall relate an obſervation, certified to me by perſons of Thebaïs, of undoubted veracity on other occaſions. It is that they have been in a ſituation to remark, that out of fifty young crocodiles, the produce of one hatching, ſeven only had eſcaped the *thirsé*. To this animal, therefore, Egypt is particularly indebted for a very ſenſible decreaſe of a ſpecies of reptiles, as hideous from their form, as dangerous from the ferocity of their diſpoſition. On this account, it would have merited, by a juſter claim than the mangouſte, to be the god of the ancient Egyptians, and the wonder of travellers who publiſh.

But this valuable race of teſtaceous animals muſt likewiſe have it's enemies; for it is not multiplied to the degree that it ought to be, conſidering the fecundity of the genus. May not the mangouſte

* Deſcrip. de l'Egypt, partie ii. page 83 et 34.

herſelf

herſelf be blamed for this curtailed propagation, which, prompted by her appetite for eggs, may deſtroy thoſe which the tortoiſes, as well as the crocodiles, hide in the ſand. She would, in this caſe, be friendly to the crocodile, inſtead of his implacable enemy, as has been pretended.

The name of *mangouſte*, and that of *ichneumon*, are, at preſent, unknown in Egypt; as little do we meet with the denomination of *Pharaoh's rat*, which Haſſelquitz has very erroneouſly alledged to have been imagined by the French. With a little reflection, or rather, with leſs partiality, he might have ſeen that the Italian *Pietro della Valle*,* that *Cornelius le Bruyn*, a Dutchman,† had employed it; that Klein, who was not a Frenchman, had given it beſides to the Indian-pig,‡ &c. &c. If this traveller had been leſs precipitate in forming his judgment, he would have comprehended, that a vulgar denomination ought not to be rigorouſly diſcuſſed, eſpecially when it is not improper; and the one in queſtion, is not ſo whimſical as a thouſand phraſes of nomenclature which he had got by heart. But he had the mania of criticizing our nation, a mania for which Buffon has reproved him

* Voyages, Paris, 1670, vol. i. p. 239.

† Voyages to the Levant, new Edit. 1725, vol. ii. p. 72. Note *a* by the Editor.

‡ Klein, *de Quadrupedibus*.

ſmartly

ſmartly enough to work a cure, had he lived to ſee his work.*

When a man has fallen into repeated miſtakes, it excites a ſuſpicion that he is frequently wrong. Buffon would not rely on the authority of Haſſelquitz, when he ſays, that the Arabic name of the mangouſte, in Egypt, is *nems*, and has given the preference to Dr. Shaw's teſtimony, who aſſures us that, in Barbary, *nems* is the appellation given to the weaſel, and *tezer-dea* to the mangouſte.† Nevertheleſs, it is indubitably certain, that the Egyptians of to-day, who, to mention it by the way, have no more conſideration for the mangouſte than we have for pole-cats, call it *nems*, and the weaſel they denominate *herſé*. I have even had opportunity to aſcertain that the two live animals which M. de Vergennes, ambaſſador of France at the Ottoman Porte, had given orders to have ſent to him from Alexandria to Conſtantinople, to be forwarded to Buffon, and which actually reached him, were *nems*, the mangouſte of Egypt. But this difference of names, in different countries, has nothing extraordinary in it. Though the Arabic language be equally diffuſed over Egypt and Barbary, the dialects have ſo little reſemblance, that the Barbareſque and the Egyptian find it extremely difficult to underſtand each other.

* Natural Hiſtory of the mangouſte, in a note.

† Shaw's Travels, the place already quoted.

CHAP.

CHAP. XVIII.

Caſtle of Roſſetta — Houhou — Lapwing — Turtle-doves — Chevêche — Lotus — Racket — Caſſia — Sycamore — Schiſhmè — Dourra — Indian-pink — Wild ducks — Thruſhes — Woodcock.

MY excurſions in the environs of Roſſetta were frequent, and they were always new ſources of pleaſure and inſtruction. I did not fail to carry my fowling-piece with me; it enabled me to procure the different ſpecies of birds which give animation to the plains, before ſo intereſting, from the variety and the abundance of the plants cultivated there. I went, the 24th of October,* to an old ruined caſtle which is at ſome diſtance, and to the north of Roſſetta. It was deſigned, as well as another placed upon the oppoſite ſhore of the Nile, as a defence to the entrance of the river. At preſent, both the one and the other are a very little ſhort of a league from the ſea. The one I am ſpeaking of, the conſtruction of which is generally

* I am well aware that the date of my excurſions will appear very trifling to all but naturaliſts: they will feel that it is eſſential to determine, for example, the epochas at which I may have encountered ſuch and ſuch a bird, in order to aſcertain that of their paſſage into Egypt.

attributed

attributed to Saint Louis, at the time of the cruſades, is almoſt entirely demoliſhed; it mounted ſtill ſome pieces of cannon, but totally unfit for ſervice. Monuments far more ancient had been employed in building it; ſeveral ſtones were to be ſtill ſeen there, ornamented with hieroglyphies. I had drawings taken of ſome of theſe antique ſtones, and diſpatched them to the miniſter Bertin, with ſeveral others of whoſe fate I am equally ignorant.

The date-trees are very greatly multiplied in all theſe countries. Several kinds of birds perch on their long foliage, whilſt others hop, from branch to branch, in the thick hedges of the encloſures. I killed that day houhous, lapwings, turtle-doves, and a chevêche.

The firſt of theſe birds, although very common in the environs of Roſſetta, and, as I have been informed, in thoſe of Damietta, was not known to naturaliſts previous to my journey into Egypt. I ſent deſcriptions of them, with notes, to Buffon; and his ingenious fellow-labourer, Guenau de Montbeillard, has publiſhed them in the natural hiſtory of birds, article of the *houhou of Egypt*. Although this little diſcovery in ornithology be my property, I will not repeat the details of it here, the work of Buffon being in the poſſeſſion of every body. The little which I am going to add, is the

fruit of poſterior obſervations, to thoſe which are already conſigned to the natural hiſtory, general and particular.

The *houhous* have very ſhort wings, and yet they are long in proportion to the body. They accordingly fly indifferently: they can neither ſoar, nor even croſs, on the ſame flight, a ſpace of ever ſo little extent: if they do not meet with ſome ſhrub on which they can perch, they are ſoon obliged to let themſelves, ſo to ſpeak, fall to the ground. Finally, they poſſeſs only the faculty of flying as ſwiftly as is neceſſary, in order to catch the graſshoppers, and the other inſects of the ſame ſpecies, of which they compoſe the principal part of their ſubſiſtence. They are not at all wild, and you can approach them very nearly.

If any thing could determine us to abandon the methods of natural hiſtory, founded merely on ſome exterior forms of animals, and by which thoſe are frequently claſſed together whoſe natures are entirely oppoſite, it would be, without doubt, the compariſon of the *houhou* with the cuckow, of which two ſpecies have been made of the ſame genus. In reality, the common cuckow, the only one of all birds which diſplays neither attention to, nor affection for her progeny, the only one which carries her indifference ſo far as to abandon them to a

ſtrange

ſtrange mother, whoſe hopes ſhe has had the barbarity to annihilate, the only one, in fine, which nature has deprived of the happineſs of rearing her brood, and of laviſhing on them thoſe tender cares which, in our woods, are obſerved in theſe little winged communities, the cuckow, I ſay, is too diſſimilar from it's habits, which form an exception in the hiſtory of animals, to a bird whoſe manners poſſeſs nothing but what is highly intereſting. The *houhou* is not a ſolitary bird: they go in pairs, and the attachment which unites them appears durable; ſhe ſits on her eggs and rears her brood. It does not go to ſeek for the thick ſhades of the foreſts, it takes pleaſure in places inhabited. It does not dread the neighbourhood of man; and modeſt in it's plumage, from the grave tone of it's voice, and from the gentleneſs of it's manners, it employs itſelf in rendering him ſervices, by continually hunting thoſe inſects which devour the harveſts; a new proof that brilliancy and noiſe are not always the companions of utility. A difference in their manners equally characteriſtic, whatever may be, in other reſpects, the outward reſemblance, ſeparates very diſtinctly two ſpecies of birds, which have only ſome ſlight ſimilarity in form; and even this ſimilarity abundantly remote, as the *houhou* has the nail of the poſterior claw bending inward, ſtrait and lengthened, like that of the lark, whereas this

remarkable conformation is not to be found on the foot of the cuckow.

One of the moſt common birds in Lower Egypt, principally at the commencement of winter, is the lapwing,*. To thoſe which do not quit the country, flocks of birds of paſſage add themſelves, which, from northern regions, come to ſeek, together with a warmer climate, a more plentiful ſupply of nouriſhment, and this they find in the great number of inſects which the Nile, on withdrawing itſelf, leaves expoſed. Theſe are very fat, and their fleſh is tender and well taſted: on the contrary, the ſedentary lapwing is reckoned very bad eating.†. The inhabitants do not kill them: they are not at all wild; there is a conſiderable number of them in the tumultuous city of Cairo, where they build their neſts in perfect ſecurity on the roofs of the houſes.

I have frequently ſeen, in Egypt, lapwings collected in ſmall bodies. When one of them is ſeparated from the reſt, ſhe calls her companions by a ſhrill cry, repeated twice, *zi, zi*. When they are

* Hiſt. Nat. des Oiſ. et pl. enlum. No. 52.—*Upupæ epops*. Lin.

† Lapwings are eaten in ſeveral parts of Italy. I have ſeen them generally ornamenting the hooks of the cook-ſhops of Genoa.

perched,

perched, their note, which it gave me pleaſure to liſten to with attention, may be very well expreſſed by the ſyllable *poun*, which they pronounce with a ſtrong and grave voice, generally three times ſucceſſively; at each time they bring back their long beak on their breaſt, and raiſe up their head in a lively manner. Sometimes, alſo, they utter a hoarſe and diſagreeable ſound, and this only once. In a ſtate of reſt, their creſt and beak, turned backward, are on the ſame horizontal plane.

There is, as well as in the lapwings, a great difference in the quality of the fleſh, between the turtle-doves of paſſage, and thoſe which do not quit Egypt. The firſt furniſh very good eating, whereas the others are a mere dry and taſteleſs viand. The turtle-doves which arrive in Egypt in the autumn, and which extend themſelves from the ſea up to Cairo, are of the common ſpecies,* and thoſe which inhabit the country, form a very diſtinct race. The upper part of the head, and of the neck, is of a light lint gray; the back, and the ſuperior coverings of the wings, of the ſame colour, but the red tint is more vivid. Upon the upper part of the neck is a half collar, black and narrow; the throat and the inferior coverings of the tail are white; the under part of the neck is of a delicate lint gray;

* Tourterelle commun, Buffon, Hiſt. Nat. des Oiſ. et pl. enlūm. No. 394. *Columba turtur.* Lin.

the ſtomach and the belly are of a dirty white. The firſt plumes of the wings are brown ſhaded with red, and the others aſh coloured, and bordered, without and within, of a light aſh gray. The feathers of the tail are, in gradation, of a light aſh colour, and terminated with white, excepting the one moſt exterior on each ſide, which is entirely white. All the plumes, thoſe of the wings, as thoſe of the tail, are, underneath, of a deep aſh colour for nearly a third part of their length; the remainder is white, but their colour is much lighter in the females. The iris of the eye is orange coloured; the beak, aſhen; the tarſus and the toes are of a roſe colour.

I preſerved, during two years, ſeveral pairs of theſe beautiful birds, and I never could perceive any alteration in the colours of their plumage; from whence it follows, that the other turtles, which might be compared with them, are of different ſpecies, or, at leaſt, of conſtant varieties in the ſame ſpecies; ſuch are, for example, the turtle-doves, with a ring round their necks, of Barbary, which would perfectly reſemble theſe, if the ground of their plumage were not of a beautiful white; it further follows from this, that the knowledge of the ſpecies of turtle-doves, foreign to our climate, is not yet acquired, and that in being too haſty in claſſing together ſeveral kinds, in reality ſeparate,

much

much confuſion has been created in their hiſtory. The race of turtle doves with a ring round the neck, of Egypt, leſs fat and more delicate than thoſe of Europe,* appear to be the ſame with that of the *turtle dove with a ring, of Senegal*, deſcribed by Briſſon,† as far as we can judge from the *enſemble* of the deſcriptions.

Furthermore, theſe turtle doves, of whatever ſpecies they be, whether travellers or domeſticated, are equally preſerved by the inhabitants of Egypt: they do not kill, and never eat them. Wiſhing to know the motive of this abſtinence among people who poſſeſs ſo little in the greater part of their actions, I learnt that it was for the honour of humanity. It is a conſequence of the reſpect due to hoſpitality, which the Arabs hold in ſuch high eſtimation, and of which they have communicated ſome ſhades to the people who dwell among them. They would regard it as a violation of this hoſpitality not to ſpare thoſe birds, which come with a perfect confidence to live amongſt them, and there to become ſkilful, but uſeleſs, preceptors of love and tenderneſs. The very farmer who ſees his harveſts

* Tourterelle à collier. Buffon, Hiſt. Nat. des Oiſ. & pl. enlum. No. 244. *Columba riſoria.* Lin.

† Ornith. tome. i. page 95, gen. i. Tourterelle à collier du Senegal. Buffon, Hiſt. Nat. des Ois. Etrangers qui ont rapport aux tourterelles, art. 2.—*Columba vindæa.* Lin.

a prey to the flights of turtle doves which alight on his fields, neither deſtroys nor harraſſes them, but ſuffers them to multiply in tranquillity. This condeſcenſion was not imitated by Europeans; they did not make the leaſt ſcruple of killing the turtle doves in the fields. It was from them that I learnt the delicate diſtinction between the fleſh of the one and of the others. But they durſt not have put them openly to death at Cairo, where they are greatly multiplied, and perfectly familiar. On my firſt journey, I had the pleaſure of ſeeing there, at the end of the month of Auguſt, a pair of ring-necked turtle doves build their neſt on the ſhelf of a window in the conſul's houſe. Habituated to the protection of man, and having nothing beſides to dread from the intemperature of the atmoſphere, theſe gentle birds employed very little art in this work; it was nothing but a few ſtraws negligently laid acroſs. The female depoſited there, on the night of the 28th, an egg, which would undoubtedly have been followed by another. I took the utmoſt precaution that ſhe ſhould not be diſturbed, and I was not ſparing of my orders, that her arrangements might be perfectly free from interruption; but all was in vain. The neſt, the eggs, were carried off, and with them the fruits of the love of that ſpecies of bird which beſt knows the feelings of it, and the ſatisfaction which I ſhould have enjoyed in watching their progreſs, and in obſerving

obſerving them during the period of incubation, and the attention which they beſtow on their young. A Turk, an Egyptian would have had reſpect to theſe affecting operations of nature; an European annihilated them.

Whether theſe turtle-doves attach themſelves to the heart of cities ſo hoſpitably diſpoſed towards them, or whether they adorn retirements more natural, they are in both without diſtruſt, and their familiarity is equally endearing. The orchards of Roſſetta are filled with them; the preſence of man does not intimidate them, but they are more frequently heard than ſeen; they take delight to hide amid the thick and interlaced branches of the orange and lemon trees, and ſeldom do they riſe to the ſummit of the palm trees which overtop them. Their cooings declare that they have choſen the moſt beautiful of trees for the throne of their love, and that, under a balmy ſhade, they are concealing from every eye it's moſt delicious myſteries.

In fine, the laſt bird which I fell in with on my expedition to the weſtern caſtle of Roſſetta was a chevêche or ſcreech owl.* It differed, indeed, ſomewhat in colour from thoſe of Europe, but theſe

* Chevêche ou petite chouellé. Nat. Hiſt. des Oiſ. & pl. enlum. No. 439. *Strix paſſerina.* Lin.

differences,

differences, ſo common among birds of this kind, did not appear to me ſufficiently deciſive to conſtitute a variety, much leſs a diſtinct ſpecies. It ſeems uſeleſs, therefore, to preſent the particular deſcription I have taken of it. It is well known that ſcreech owls ſee much better during the day than other birds of night; and, indeed, I killed this one at noon-day, perched upon a tree. It's name in Egypt is *ſahr*; it was a female.

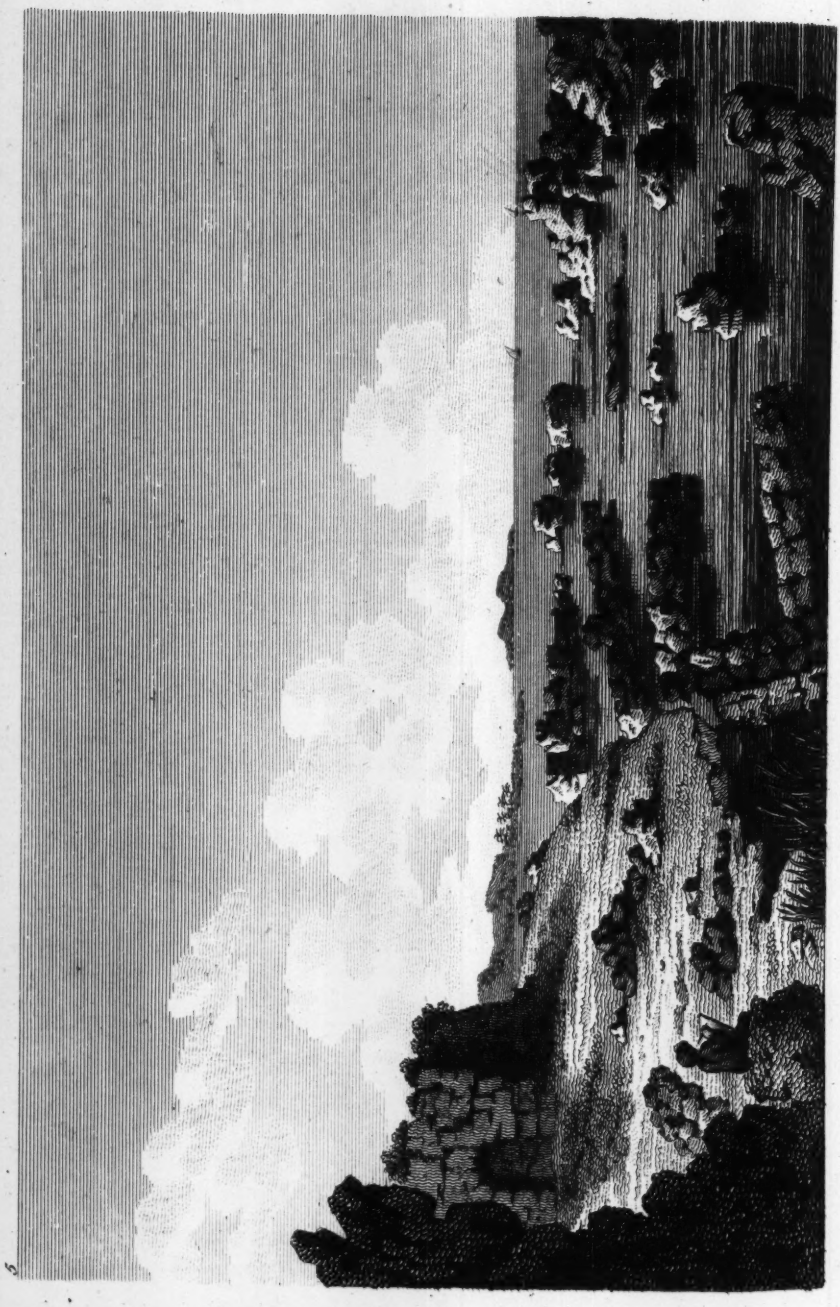
On this day I travelled over a very delightful country. It was enriched by the cultivation of numerous plants; ſeveral ſorts of trees ſhaded and formed in ſome places beautiful groves. The waters which refreſh the country vied with the land, and alſo lent their tribute to an uſeful fertility; the large leaves of the *lotus* covered the ſurface of the rivulets and ditches, and announced an abundant crop of roots.

This plant is the *noufar* of the Arabians, which we have called *nénufar*. It is a water lily, with white and odoriferous flowers.* It's roots form one of the moſt common aliments of the Egyptians, as they formerly did, under the name of *lotus*. It appears ſingular that ſeveral authors, from Maillet† down to M.

* *Nymphæa lotus*. Lin.—Forſkal, Flora Egyptiaco-Arabica, p. 100.

† Deſcription of Egypt, part ii. p. 18.

Pauw,



Part of the Ruins of Canopus.

Pauw,* ſhould have overlooked this *lotus* in the nymphea, and that the latter ſhould have declared that this plant had diſappeared out of Egypt, where it formerly grew in great abundance. Savary had already expoſed this error of M. Pauw, but he goes too far when he ſays it is not wonderful that this learned gentleman ſhould have been miſtaken, *ſince moſt of the travellers who have journeyed over Egypt, have never ſeen the lotus.*† On the contrary, it is impoſſible even to enter Egypt without ſeeing many of them; for in the neighbourhood of Roſſetta, the numerous ditches of the fields, where rice is cultivated, are filled with them.

But what has contributed to confuſe the hiſtory of the *lotus nymphea* is, that it has frequently been miſtaken for a totally different plant, which the ancients alſo called *lotus*, and which compoſed the principal nouriſhment of certain nations of Africa, who on that account were called *lotophagi*. This latter bears no relation to the *lotus* which grows in Egypt; it is a ſhrub, a ſpecies of wild jujube-tree, as Citizen Desfontaines has aſcertained,‡ and which grows in ſeveral parts of Barbary.§ However this

* Philoſophical Reſearches, reſpecting the Egyptians and Chineſe, vol. i. p. 157.

† Letters on Egypt, vol. i. page 8. notes.

‡ Journal de Phyſique, October 1788.

§ *Rhamnus lotus.* Lin.

may

may be, the *nymphea* of Lower Egypt yields a kind of tubercle, which is gathered when the waters have withdrawn. Thoſe which are left are ſufficient to reproduce the plant. They are dried and preſerved to be eaten, boiled like our potatoes, which they nearly reſemble in taſte; but they have leſs conſiſtency, and are not ſo ſpongy, ſo that they are ſwallowed with difficulty, and it would not be eaſy to eat more than one of them without being obliged to drink. They are ſold ready dreſſed, and at a very reduced price in the ſtreets of Roſſetta, where the lower claſſes eat them in great quantities.

Among uſeful plants, I obſerved the racket,* the fruit of which the inhabitants alſo eat, and among the trees the *ſeiſſaban*, or the yellow flowered and ſweet ſmelling acacia,† and the ſycamore.‡ The foliage of the latter is of a very beautiful green; it's branches expand, and cover with their ſhade a vaſt extent of ground. It's wood is very hard, and almoſt incorruptible. The ancients em-

* *Cactus opuntia.* Lin.

† *Ficus ſycamorus.* Lin. *Ficus ſycamorus vera.* Forſkal, Flora, Egyptiaco-Arabica, page 180.

‡ The caſſia of gardeners. *Mimoſa farneſiana.* Lin. N. B. This *ſeiſſaban* muſt not be confounded with the *ſeſban* (*æſchymene ſeſban.* Lin.) a ſhrub with yellow flowers about the ſize of the myrtle, and with which the Egyptians make their hedges.

ployed

ployed it, for the moſt part, in making caſes for mummies: it's fruit does not hang, like that of other trees, along the boughs and branches, and at their extremity; it is faſtened to the trunk itſelf and to the larger ſtems. It is a ſpecies of fig very like the common one, but more inſipid. The natives eat it with pleaſure; it is conſidered as refreſhing, and calculated to quench thirſt.

The *ſchiſhmé* is a ſcarcer ſhrub, and one which is only cultivated as a curioſity in ſome of the gardens of Roſſetta. It bears leguminous flowers of a deep yellow, and oblong leaves terminating in a point. Long pods, bent in the form of a ſcythe, ſucceed the flowers; theſe contain flattened ſeeds, ſhaped like a heart, the middle of which is gray, and ſurrounded with a large border, jutting out and of a brown colour. The Egyptians conſider theſe ſeeds as a ſpecific againſt ophthalmy, a diſeaſe ſo prevalent in their country. They pound them, and reduce them to a yellow powder, which is blown into the eyes either pure or mixed with pulveriſed ſugar. Although the *ſchiſhmé* thrives very well in the cool and ſhaded places of the fields of Roſſetta, the ſeed which it produces there is not eſteemed; that is preferred which is brought from Nubia, where probably this ſhrub is indigenous.

I ſaw

I ſaw beſides ſeveral fields covered with a ſpecies of large millet, which in Egypt is called *dourra*.* It is an object of great cultivation, which yields an abundant harveſt. It's produce is eſtimated at nearly fifty fold. The Egyptians make bread, or rather indifferent muffins of the ſeed of the *dourra*; they likewiſe aſcribe to it great efficacy in healing fractures of the limbs, applying it when reduced to a powder.

The great Indian pink, or African,† diſplayed it's beautiful yellow flowers amidſt other plants, in different gardens.

We had reached the period in which wild ducks of various ſorts arrive from every quarter in Lower Egypt. The ſmaller kind, as the teal, come thither at the beginning of October, and the larger ones appear later. They all aſſemble on the lakes of the Delta, which are not far from Roſſetta and Damietta, and form innumerable flocks which do not take their departure till after winter. They are caught with nets, and this game, which was very productive, had not eſcaped the fiſcal tyranny of the Mamelucs or of their overſeers; it was farmed out, and was conſequently excluſive. Great quan-

* *Holcus durra.* Lin.—Forſkal, Flora Egyp.-Arab. p. 174.

† *Tagetes erecta.* Lin.—Forſkal, ibidem, page 120.

tities

tities of theſe birds were brought to the markets of Roſſetta, and were ſold to very good account. As the Mahometans ate no animal which had not been bled, the throats of the wild ducks were cut, in which ſtate they were left living, after having their wings broken, which were faſtened over the back, ſo that it was very difficult to get one of theſe birds which was not mangled, or whoſe plumage had not been damaged.

The thruſh arrives in the ſame countries at the ſame ſeaſon, to remain till the month of March. But whilſt the wild ducks flock to enliven the collections of diſtant waters, the thruſh remains near human habitations. It takes delight in the ſame orchards as the turtle dove, and ſeeks like it the thick and balmy groves of the orange and lemon tree.

A peaſant called me near a covert, and told me that he had juſt ſeen a woodcock enter. I found him there accordingly. Theſe birds do not, for the moſt part, take their paſſage into Egypt till the month of November, but they are few in number. It is a ſingular thing to ſee the woodcock, which ſeems to be a bird peculiar to cold climates, ſeek a gentle winter even in countries ſo far to the ſouthward.

CHAP.

CHAP. XIX.

Natron—Bleaching of cloth and thread—Other uſes of natron—Senna—Birds—Deſcription of a ſpecies of Falcon—Wag-tail—Dragon-flies—Waſp—Cricket—Rain—Delta—Herons—Coot—Quails—Snipes—Armed plovers—Fenu-greek.

THERE are in Roſſetta magazines of natron, and manufactures in which it is employed. It is well known that this is an alkaline earthy ſalt, or mineral alkali, found more particularly in Egypt, in the middle of a deſert, to which the ancients gave the name of the Deſert of Nitria, becauſe our ſaltpetre being entirely unknown to them, they had given the name of nitre to that ſubſtance, which the Arabs deſcribe under the denomination of *natroum*, from which we have derived *natron*. It is from having neglected to examine the paſſages of Theophraſtus, of Dioſcorides, of Galen, and of Pliny, that ſeveral moderns have confounded nitre and natron, which are very different ſubſtances.

It is uncommon to meet with natron perfectly pure. Beſides the earthy matter which is almoſt always mixed with it, it is not an entirely free alkali, it is uſually united to marine ſalt, to Glauber's ſalt,

ſalt, and, finally, to a ſmall degree of vitriolic tartar. In the magazines two ſorts are to be diſtinguiſhed; the common and the *ſultanié*, this anſwers to the word *royal*, by which are deſigned in France ſeveral commodities of a ſuperior quality. This *ſultan*-natron is whiter, better cryſtallized, and more pure than the common; it is conſequently more powerful, and, in the uſe of it, a ſmaller quantity is employed.

This mineral alkali poſſeſſes the ſame properties with the vegetable alkali, or ſalt-wort; but it poſſeſſes them in a ſuperior degree of virtue. It's principal uſe is for the bleaching of thread and cloth. The following is the method which I have ſeen purſued at Roſſetta. The ſkeins of thread are laid in a large copper built in maſon-work; a layer of natron is placed upon them; afterwards cold water is poured on it, in a ſufficient quantity to ſoak the thread and the natron. They are thus left altogether for the ſpace of three days, at the end of which the thread is drawn out, and ſuſpended on ſticks placed over the kettle. When it is drained, a fire is kindled under the copper, and the water in which the thread had been ſteeped with the natron is made to boil, after having ſome lime added to it. The thread is dipped in it, and waſhed ſeveral times, ſtirring it through this hot lye, without leaving it there. It is immediately carried to the Nile,

where it is waſhed and beaten. It is afterwards ſpread out, in order to dry.

When the ſkeins are pretty dry, they are waſhed anew in the whey which flows from cheeſes, in Arabic called *meſch*. This is a ſort of dreſſing which gives quality to the cloth; and when the Egyptians handle a cloth not very ſtout, they ſay it has no *meſch*.

To bleach two hundred pounds of thread it commonly requires one hundred pounds of natron, and from ſixty to eighty pounds of lime; obſerving, however, that the *Jultan* natron, that is to ſay, that which is the pureſt, being more powerful than the common, muſt be uſed in a ſmaller quantity. Without this precaution, the thread or the cloth would run the hazard of being burnt.

So expeditious a method of bleaching cloth and thread, would merit being attempted in France. It is ſaid that it was formerly adopted at Rouen, but that it had been laid aſide becauſe it burnt the cloths.* It is poſſible that they did not make the proper preparations, nor obſerve the ſame proceſs as the Egyptians, for it is very certain that neither their threads nor cloths were burnt. The commerce in natron, a very briſk one for Turkey, and

* Voyage de la Boullaye le Gouz. Paris, 1657, page 383.

equally

equally ſo in the ſtate of Venice, where this alkali, mixed with gray-ſtone, forms thoſe beautiful blown glaſſes of *Murano*, had entirely come to nothing, as far as it regarded France. However it apparently made an effort to revive, towards the end of the year 1777. A French merchant, eſtabliſhed at Roſſetta, at that time conſigned a pretty large quantity of natron to his correſpondent at Marſeilles. I was never in a ſituation to diſcover whether this dawning of commerce, was productive of any fortunate conſequences; but our manufactures, our trade, would reap very great advantages, if the natron, which nature produces abundantly in Egypt, were to become a branch of commerce as lively as it is practicable.

It is not only to the bleaching of cloths and thread that the uſe of the natron is reſtricted in countries where it is produced. It is likewiſe uſed in dying, in the preparation of leather, in glaſs making, in whitening linen, in paſtry inſtead of leaven, in preſerving viands and making them tender, and, finally, in mixing with ſnuff, and giving it a higher degree of poignancy. With regard to this laſt mode of uſing it, I conjecture that we ſhall not be tempted to imitate it. It is not the leſs general in Egypt, the inhabitants of which do not care for our tobacco without a mixture, becauſe it makes no more impreſſion on their organ, ac-

cuſtomed to the pungency and the ſharpneſs of natron, than if it were ſo much duſt.

I can make a reply, by the way, to the ſeventh part of queſtion ſixty-four of Michaëlis.* *Does the natron, extracted from the lake which is in the deſert of St. Macarius, ſerve Egypt for the purpoſe of ſalting, and ſometimes inſtead of kitchen ſalt? Do the poor, at leaſt, make this uſe of it? Is it likewiſe employed in the ſalting of bread?* Marine ſalt is in great abundance in Egypt, and at a very low rate, for this reaſon, the inhabitants have no occaſion to ſupply any deficiency in this article with natron, which is not ſo cheap. In the eighth part of the ſame queſtion M. Michaëlis farther demands: *Whether natron is to be found no where but in the lake of the deſert of Saint Macarius?* It is to be found in a lake called *Terrana*, becauſe from this village it is conveyed to be embarked upon the Nile, and this lake is, in reality, in the deſert of Nitria, or of St. Macarius. There is likewiſe ſome in a leſs conſiderable lake, in the neighbourhood of *Damanhour*; but that of *Terrana* is the largeſt, and ſupplies much more of this material.

The duties on natron were farmed out, and the trade was very productive, both to the merchant and the public treaſury. This farming did not re-

* Voyageurs ſavans et curieux, ou Tablettes inſtructives, &c.

ſemble

ſemble the forced adjudication of the ſenna, which the government of Cairo had pretended to impoſe upon the European merchants who reſided there. They were obliged to buy a large quantity of this drug, which is gathered in Upper Egypt. This was, with reſpect to them, a ſpecies of *avanie* (intolerant impoſt*); for the culture of ſenna was ſo conſiderable, that they could not find ſale for it. The Venetian merchants took the third of the annual produce, and the French the other two-thirds; the price of which, to theſe laſt, amounted to more than 25,000 francs (1000 guineas). The loſs was ſtill augmented by the agreement which they had made with the druggiſts of Marſeilles, not to ſell the ſenna to any but them; and theſe, on their ſide, were authorized not to take a larger quantity than they had occaſion for. The reſult of this agreement was, that the greateſt part of the ſenna remained on the hands of the French merchants. They had ſtill, in their houſe at Roſſetta, magazines which had continued full for ſeveral years.

Whilſt our merchants, bound by their contract with the Maſſilian druggiſts, were loſing conſiderably on this commodity, the Venetians made large

* *Avanie*, it is thus that they name in the commerce of the Levant, thoſe violent and vexatious means which the Turks employ to extract money from Europeans. Theſe intolerances ſucceeded each other in Egypt in a dreadful manner.

profits by it, by ſending it into Holland, where it had an extenſive ſale. Some of the Engliſh bought it themſelves at Cairo from the Venetians, and found means to receive good profits from it.

To conclude, it is an error to deſcribe the ſenna of the Levant by the denomination of the ſenna of Alexandria. It is ſhipped there in reality, but it does not grow in the neighbourhood of that city; it thrives no where in Egypt but towards the cataracts of the Nile, near Aſſouan. It's Arabic name is *ſena*.*

On a little excurſion which I took the 4th of November, I killed a king's-fiſher,† a thruſh of the large ſort,‡ and a bird of prey, which has not been deſcribed, and which appeared to me a ſpecies of falcon. The upper part of the beak was hooked at the extremity, and covered underneath with a yellow ſkin; the ſecond feather of the wing was longer than the others, and thoſe of the tail were in ſlight gradations. It's entire length is one foot, that of the beak nine lines and a half, from the ex-

* *Caſſia ſenna*. Lin.—*Caſſia lanceolata*. Forſkal, Flora Egyptiaco-arabica, page 85.

† Martin pecheur ou alcyon. Buffon, Hiſt. Nat. des Oiſ. et pl. enlum. No. 77. *Alcedo iſpida*. Lin.

‡ La draine. Buffon, Hiſt. Nat. des Oiſ. et pl. enlum. No. 489. *Turdus viſcivorus*. Lin.

tremities

tremities of the wings at their full extenſion, two feet all but an inch, that of the wings nine inches; to conclude, that of the tail ſix inches; it meaſures more than fifteen lines with it's wings folded, or in a ſtate of repoſe.

The feathers on the top of the head are black in the middle, and reddiſh in the other parts; thoſe of the ſides of the head are variegated with gray, black, and red, excepting thoſe below the eyes, which are black, with a gray ſpot at the poſterior angle of each eye. All the upper part of the body is of a reddiſh brown, with tranſverſal rays of black. The throat is covered with gray feathers, and almoſt entirely fringed. The upper part of the ſtomach is reddiſh, with black and longitudinal ſpots. The remainder of the under part of the body is gray tinged with red. The feathers of the legs are of the ſame colour, but their ſtem and their extremities are black, which form a ſort of tears of this colour. The upper part of the wings are variegated with brown, gray, white, and a reddiſh hue. The tail is of the ſame colour with the back, but is ſtriped tranſverſely with black. The beak is gray towards it's baſe, and black through all the remainder. The iris is the colour of a hazel-nut; the ſkin around the eyes, the tarſus, and the toes is yellow, like that at the baſis of the beak; to conclude, the claws are black.

This was a female. The inteſtinal canal was one foot nine inches and a half. The membranous ſtomach was filled with animal ſubſtances, among which I diſtinguiſhed ſome parts of large inſects. The food of this bird muſt have been extremely plentiful, for I never in my life ſaw one ſo fat. Of three which I ſhot this ſame day, this alone remained to me, the two others, though fallen from the tree on which they were perched, having made their eſcape, and loſt themſelves in the gardens, at the moment when I was going to take them up.

This ſpecies of birds of prey commonly take their ſtations on the tops of date-trees, and utter a ſharp cry. This might probably be the ſame with that deſcribed by Forſkal, as a ſpecies of falcon.* There is, in reality, a good deal of conformity in our deſcriptions. Forſkal enquires afterwards whether this be a real falcon, or a kite, and whether it may not be the *falco forficatus* of Linnæus. This I will aſſuredly not undertake to reſolve, as Forſkal, much better verſed than myſelf in the art of un-

* Falco cera pedibuſque flavis, ſupra cinereus, ſubtus ferrugineus alis ſupra fuſcis; caudâ forficatâ, fuſco faſciata, longitudine corporis. Arab. *Addaj*. Forſkal, Deſcrip. animalium, page 1. According to the deſcription of the Daniſh profeſſor, Gmelin has deſcribed the ſame bird in the third edition of the *Syſtem Naturæ* of Linnæus, under the denomination of *falco ægyptius*.

ravelling

ravelling the phraſes of nomenclature, has not been able to decide accurately on this point. But as far as I am able to judge, the bird which I am deſcribing is of the falcon genus.

I likewiſe ſaw in the hedges the *troglodyte*.* Chaffinches in every place; larks in the open country; and, near the waters, a great number of wagtails, or laundreſſes.† This ſpecies is extended all over Egypt, and they appear to dwell there conſtantly. The yellow wagtail, on the contrary, is only a bird of paſſage,‡ and this was the firſt time that it appeared there that year; it returns towards the ſpring. The two ſpecies have the ſame manner of living; they both frequent the neighbourhood of dwelling-houſes and of the waters. However, the laundreſs approaches man more familiarly; ſhe enters into the cities, hops about lightly and with confidence on thoſe places over which the rice is ſpread, notwithſtanding the number of labourers who are employed in drying this grain. The yellow wagtail gives more willingly the preference to the country.

* See p. 17.

† Lavandiere, Buffon, Hiſt. Nat. des Oiſ. et pl. enlum. No. 652. *Motacilla alba.* Lin.

‡ Yellow wagtail. Buffon, Hiſt. Nat. des Oiſ. et pl. enlum. No. 28. fig. 1. *Motacilla baarula.* Lin.

It

It appears as if all the moſt charming productions of nature had aſſembled themſelves in the gardens of Roſſetta, and there preſented to the man capable of appreciating their value, the riches which ſhe does not always ſcatter around. Theſe delicious ſpots were then enamelled with little animated and winged bodies, ſparkling with the moſt brilliant purple, ſometimes fluttering amidſt the branches of the ſhrubs, and ſometimes eclipſing the luſtre of the flowers on coming cloſe to them. You behold there a conſiderable number of a remarkable ſpecies of beautiful inſects, the elegance of whoſe appearance, and their attire have procured for them the name of damſels (dragon flies*). The entire body of this ſort is of the fineſt purple; the wings, orange coloured at the bottom, have a ſpot of the ſame colour towards the extremity: a black line, which ſeparates the whole length of the body underneath, ſtill contributes to heighten it's purple hue. The length of this inſect is eighteen lines; that of the corſelet, which is covered with down, alſo purple coloured, is four lines and a half, and it's breadth two lines and a half; the wings meaſure one inch and two lines.

A beautiful ſpecies of another genus of inſects, leſs innocent than the dragon-fly, alſo give luſtre to

* Libellula.

this

this ſpot by their colours. A waſp ten lines long, is very common there. She has two large black eyes, and upon the crown of the head three little black points, diſpoſed in the form of a triangle, and reſembling eyes; the front of the head is of a beautiful yellow; a triangular ſpot of the ſame colour between the antennæ, which alſo have a ſlight tinge of yellow at the bottom; the antennæ are purple the reſt of the length. The remainder of the head, the corſelet, and the thighs, are purple; the legs and the tarſus of a brown gray; the claws black; to conclude, the wings yellowiſh in the upper part, and grey in the under.

The firſt ring of the belly is of a ſhining black, bordered on the belly only, with a beautiful yellow: this border is itſelf terminated by a little line, which appears to be of the pureſt gold. The ſecond ring is entirely black; the third is yellow above and below; it is divided above, in it's breadth, by a black line, accompanied on each ſide with a ſpot likewiſe black, and, on the under part of the ſame ring, there is, on each ſide, another black ſpot ſmaller than thoſe which are on the upper part. The fourth circle is black above, and brown below: finally, the other circles are of a blackiſh brown.

I found

I found ſeveral individuals of the ſame ſpecies, the colours of which were leſs brilliant, with ſome differences in the ſhades. Theſe waſps, very common in the country, appear alſo in the cities. Several of them entered into my chamber at Roſſetta.

At this ſeaſon you frequently meet, beſides, a ſpecies of hopping inſects, known by the name of grillon, *grillus* (cricket). I believe it has not been deſcribed, or deſigned, and I am going to depict it. This cricket is fourteen lines long, and it's greateſt breadth is a little more than three lines; the antennæ are five lines, the ſheaths thirteen; they extend beyond the body three lines.

The diſtribution of the colours is elegant: the antennæ are red, the crown of the head is marked, lengthwiſe, by a blackiſh line, bordered with yellow, and which extends upon the corſelet enlarging itſelf. The large eyes are ſtriped lengthwiſe with black and white; the little ſmooth eye in the middle of the head is of an orange colour: you might take the others for little beads of the moſt brilliant gold; the reſt of the head is of a greeniſh gray; the reſt of the corſelet, and the under part of the belly, are of gray ſhaded with yellow, the upper part of the belly is greeniſh.

This

This inſect has, beſides, ſheaths of a dull red, with a ſtripe of an apple green on a third of their length: the wings outſtretched of gray tinged with yellow, and their fibres or nerves red; the thighs of the two firſt rows with yellow claws; the legs, the tarſus, and the palettes, red; the claws black; the thighs of the poſterior legs, yellow on the outſide, and reddiſh within; the legs and the tarſus of the moſt beautiful red, with tints of the livelieſt blue on the upper part of the legs.

The 6th of November, at three in the morning, a conſiderable ſhower of rain fell, with a wind from the north-north-weſt. This epocha was not unintereſting; for this was the firſt rain of the year which deſcended to cool the atmoſphere of Lower Egypt, and, as I have already ſaid, this was the commencement of that ſeaſon to which the name of winter was given, becauſe the temperature became leſs ſcorching.

The next day I croſſed the Nile, and took a long walk over the humid and verdant ſoil of the Delta. This part of Lower Egypt is an immenſe plain, but it has not that fatiguing monotony ſo general in level countries. The cities and the villages are built upon little eminences, which raiſe them above the height of the inundation. Groves always ſmiling

ing with verdure, detached trees, but at very ſmall diſtances from each other, bound the view, and do not permit it to extend itſelf but by numerous openings, which conduct it to proſpects more or leſs diſtant, more or leſs pleaſing. Encloſures, where plants of every ſpecies flouriſh, where the golden apples of the orange-tree crown the ſweeteſt of perfumed flowers, and the uſeful and modeſt pot-herbs; plains on which fertility has fixed her abode, even the huts of labouring men, the animals which live around them, every thing gives delight in a landſcape ſo variegated, all rejoices the ſoul and gratifies the ſight.

A multitude of birds collect themſelves in a country ſo beautiful: they ſeem, by their numbers, by their movements, and by the diverſity of their accents, to celebrate there that continual banquet of nature, theſe eternal bleſſings of fertility.

I ſaw, in this place, turtle-doves of two ſpecies, blackbirds, lapwings, and white *herons*, which the French, who inhabit Egypt, name the *ox-keeper*, becauſe, in reality, they ſeek the places frequented by theſe animals, follow them, and often perch on their backs.* In Egypt two ſpecies of *herons* are

* Aigrette. Buffon, Hiſt. Nat. des Oiſ. et pl. enlum. No. 901. *Ardea garzetta*. Lin.

found;

found; the plumage of all of them is of a dazzling white, but they differ with reſpect to ſize. The ſmall ſpecies is the moſt common; the individuals which compoſe them, likewiſe differ from each other in the colour of their feet; ſome of them are black, others greeniſh, and ſeveral are yellow. There is every reaſon to preſume that this variety is the effect of age, or of ſex, and not a diſtinction of race. The large and the ſmall ſpecies carry on their backs long fringed and ſilky feathers, which ſerve to form plumes and tufts. All of them have not this natural attire, perhaps it is peculiar to the males only. However this may be, it was very eaſy to procure, in Egypt, the moſt beautiful feathers of theſe birds, for they were greatly multiplied in the lower parts of that country, and more particularly towards Damietta, where the waters, which they are fond of frequenting, occupy a greater ſpace. The inhabitants do not hunt them, and no perſon thinks of them as food.

I ſmile, at this moment, when I recall to mind the little occurrence to which the herons gave birth, on my journey from Roſſetta to Alexandria with M. Tott. He had, in his train, a little ſurgeon quite puffed up with folly and ſelf-ſufficiency. Uniting together their knowledge in natural hiſtory, they were clearly of opinion, that the numerous herons, whoſe dazzling whiteneſs, emblem ſo affecting

affecting of candour and of virginity,* forms the moſt beautiful ornament of the ſhores of the Nile, were the ibis of the ancients, birds on which antiquity conferred the higheſt honours. Nothing that could be urged againſt it would induce them to alter their opinion. A contemptuous cenſure fell on thoſe travellers who had preceded them, and who had not ſufficient obſervation to ſee the ibis in Egypt, whilſt they had encountered a multitude of them the firſt time they ſet foot there. They congratulated themſelves on being in a ſituation to aſcertain that the ibis were the moſt common birds in Egypt; they alſo determined to make an ample collection of them. Whenever they deſcried a heron, they bawled as loud as they could, to direct the Egyptian ſailors to manœuvre ſo as to bring them within gun-ſhot of their mark. Theſe latter grew impatient, and ſwore at ſo many delays and ſo much labour, of which they could not conceive the importance. Nearly two hundred ſhots were fired upon the herons, but, fortunately for them, the ſportſmen were as bad markſmen, as they were ignorant of natural hiſtory; and two or three only of theſe

* It is a beautiful idea of Haſſelquitz (Travels to the Levant) to name the white heron, virgin heron, *ardea virgo*. If every denomination preſented ſo much truth, and ſo many charms as this does, nomenclature would ceaſe to be a ſcience ſo arid.

birds

birds fell the victims of the exalted opinion which had been formed of their ſpecies. The ſhooting match would not have concluded ſo ſoon, and we, to all appearance, ſhould have been eight days in reaching Cairo, from the numerous zig-zags which our heroes of the chace led us through, and the frequent pauſes with which they interrupted our navigation, if the ſurgeon, in a tranſport of ornithological enthuſiaſm, had not allowed himſelf to fall into the hold of the boat, exactly into the middle of a kettle of lentiles which was cooking for the boat's crew. This cataſtrophe was the ſignal of peace with the pretended ibis, and we were enabled to continue our voyage without any other inconvenience than the fatigue of hearing exclamations on the importance of a pretended diſcovery, which had very nearly coſt the ſurgeon rather more than it was worth.

I diſcovered in an aquatic ſpot, which was covered with reeds, a coot*, or morella, in Egypt *hoor*: I have ſince then had an opportunity of procuring ſeveral of theſe birds, and on comparing them with the deſcription which Buffon has given, I remarked ſome difference of tints in the plumage. The moſt ſtriking of theſe differences is on that

* *Foulque*. Buffon, Hiſt. Nat. des Oiſ. et pl. enlum. No. 197. *Fulica atra*. Lin.

naked portion of the leg above the knee; this is, according to Buffon, encircled with red, but in the coots which I have ſeen this circle was yellow. Theſe birds are fat in general, and their fleſh is tender and well taſted.

I likewiſe found a quail, which I killed. It was not uſual to ſee them at this period; it was the only one in the canton through which I roved. It is in the month of September that the paſſage of the quails commences on the coaſts of Egypt. They then aſſemble themſelves, more peculiarly in the ſandy iſland which divides the mouth of the Nile near Roſſetta. But I ſhall have occaſion to return to the ſubject of the truly wonderful paſſage of theſe birds.

The fields which had juſt been ſtripped of the crop of rice were filled with ſnipes.* They were there ſingularly numerous. A huntſman of Roſſetta brought us one day a baſket full of theſe birds, which he had killed with a gun in the courſe of a few hours. For my own part, I killed a dozen, and miſſed as many more, in the morning. This is pleaſant ſport, becauſe you always have a ſhot, but it is likewiſe very fatiguing. The light earth

* Becaſſine. Buffon, Hiſt. Nat. des Oiſ. & pl. enlum. No. 883. *Scolopax gallinago.* Lin.

of

of the rice grounds is ſo deeply impregnated with water, that you ſink at every ſtep you take, and ſometimes half way up your body. The ſnipes arrive at the beginning of November in ſearch of the aquatic cantons of Lower Egypt, and they paſs the whole of the winter there.

There are alſo, but fewer in number, armed and creſted plovers.* The Europeans reſident in Egypt call them *dominicans*, on account of the reſemblance which the diſtribution of black and white with which their plumage is variegated, gives them to the habit of this order of monks. Theſe plovers, exactly the ſame with thoſe which I had ſeen ſome years before, in the month of Auguſt, in the country of the Iolofs, on the weſtern coaſt of Africa, delight to frequent the borders of pools of water, on the brink of rivers, and in all humid places, although they never go into the water. Theſe are noiſy and wild birds; you approach them with difficulty; but if they have learnt to fly from man, that tyrant of the animal creation, they enjoy among themſelves love and the pleaſures of ſociability, they are never alone, they are always to be ſeen in pairs or in little troops.

* Pluvier à aigrettes. Buffon, Hiſt. Nat. des Oiſ. & pl. enlum. No. 801, under the name of the *armed plover of Senegal*. *Charadrius ſpinoſus*. Lin.

They ſold in the ſtreets of Roſſetta the ſtalks of the fenu-greek.* This plant is cultivated as fodder; and it would hold the firſt rank among all the ſorts of food which Lower Egypt ſupplied to animals, if the *barſim*, a ſpecies of clover peculiar to this country, and of which I have already ſpoken, did not exiſt there. It's Arabic name is *helbé*.

Although this helbé of the Egyptians is a ſucculent fodder for the numerous cattle which cover the plains of the Delta; although horſes, oxen, and buffaloes, eat it with equal pleaſure, it did not appear to be particularly deſtined for the food of animals, becauſe the *barſim* ſupplies them with a much better and more abundant aliment. But what will appear very extraordinary, in this country abounding in ſingularities, the Egyptians themſelves eat fenu-greek; for this reaſon it may be called with propriety the *fodder of men*.

It is in the month of November that, in the ſtreets of the cities, they call green *helbé* to ſell. It is tied up in large bundles, which the inhabitants are eager to buy at a low price, and which they devour with incredible avidity, without any ſpecies of ſeaſoning whatever. They pretend that this ſingular food is an excellent ſtomachic, a ſpecific againſt worms and the dyſentery; in a word,

* *Trigonella fœnum-grecum*. Lin.

a pre-

a preſervative againſt a number of maladies. I alſo ate ſome bunches of this fenu-greek. I did not find it unpleaſant, but I was far from experiencing, in this ſort of repaſt, the ſame pleaſure with the people of the country. With regard to it's effects, I neither received benefit nor injury from it.

The Egyptians do not content themſelves with devouring the ſtalks and the leaves of the fenu-greek, they likewiſe make the ſeeds to ſpring up, and eat the long ſhoots. It is a highly valued preparation in their eyes, which poſſeſſes in an eminent degree the virtues which they attribute to the plant. To obtain a quick germination of the ſeeds, they fill a baſket with them, which they allow to ſoak in a running water during two or three days: they afterwards heat it up on a bed of ſtraw or graſs, in order that they may become warm; they cover a portion of the ſeeds thus ſoaked with little earthen veſſels, in the form of mutilated cones, and open at top. It is from theſe openings that the ſhoots, which very ſoon grow large, ſpring forth, uniting themſelves together, and they ſtop them there by bending them downwards. At length they lift the veſſel filled with theſe young ſhoots, and eat them with the ſeeds which produced them. You may purchaſe twelve little pots thus ſtored for a medina, that is to ſay, nearly a halfpenny of our

money. It is neceſſary to have a high degree of confidence in theſe germs, to eat ſuch a quantity of them as the Egyptians do, for they are of a very ſtrong bitter. They likewiſe burn the ſeeds, and prepare them in the ſame manner as coffee, adding to them the juice of lemons. This beverage is very pleaſant. I will not ſay ſo much for a ragout greatly in vogue in the ſame country, and which is compoſed of the ſhoots of the helbé dreſſed with honey.

Furthermore, the Egyptians regard this plant as endowed with ſo many good qualities, that it is in their eyes a real panacea. Proſpero Alpini has entered into long details upon it's uſes in medicine.* After ſo many excellent properties, real or imaginary, it is not ſurprizing that the Egyptians ſhould hold fenu-greek in ſuch high eſtimation, that, according to one of their proverbs, *Happy are the feet which preſs the ground on which the helbé grows.*

But independently of theſe properties, not yet fully demonſtrated, the culture of the fenu-greek is worthy of being extended in France. It is an admirable fodder, which preſerves the health of

* See his books reſpecting the plants of Egypt and the medicine of the Egyptians.

horſes,

horſes, and even contributes to heal their diſeaſes. I have cultivated it ſucceſsfully for ſeveral years, in my ſolitary abode at Manoncourt, in the department of Meurtha. (*See the periodical paper called le Cultivateur, the 27th Meſſidor of the 3d year*; a journal which, under a modeſt title, is of the greateſt utility.)

CHAP. XX.

Journey to Aboukir—Ruins—Bedouins—Port and road for ſhips—Jew drogman—Red partridges—Ruins of Canopus—Coloſſal and fluted ſtatue—Canopus—Governor, caſtle and village of Aboukir—Little Pyramid—Return to Roſſetta.

BETWEEN Roſſetta and Alexandria, there remained for me ſtill another place to examine, formerly celebrated under the name of *Canopus*, at the preſent day the *Aboukir* of the Arabs, and, by corruption, the *Bequié* of European navigators. I knew that it was well worth ſeeing, and I departed for the purpoſe of viſiting it on the 12th of November. M. Forneti, drogman at Roſſetta, had an extreme deſire to accompany me, and we took with us a janiſſary, my draughtſman, and two ſervants.

Mounted upon mules we ſcaled the hills of ſand; the arid and moving rampart which encircles the city of Roſſetta to the weſtward. We entered into the plain of the Turrets or Pillars,* we afterwards gained the ſhore of the ſea, which we followed up to the lake of *Maadié*.

* See page 206.

A flock

A flock of the vultures of Egypt, to which has been given, rather improperly, the name of *Pharaoh's chickens*,* were feaſting on the putrid carcaſe of a dead animal caſt upon the ſand.

We were detained a full hour on our paſſage over the lake *Maadié*, owing to the bad conſtruction of the boat. With an ordinary ferry-boat we could not have taken a quarter of an hour. A little before our arrival at this remnant of the Canopic branch of the Nile, we had encountered a little camp of Bedouin Arabs, compoſed ſimply of four tents, under which men, women, and animals aſſembled together. The wandering life of theſe vagrant and thieviſh people, will not allow them to continue long in one place. They preſented us with ſome very bad water, which thirſt prompted us to ſwallow, and for which we paid them pretty liberally.

After leaving *Maadié* we regained the ſea-ſhore, along which a dike or cauſeway has been built, in order to repel the waters, the ſandy earth being on a level with the ſea. On this dike there are turrets placed from diſtance to diſtance. We quitted the road of Alexandria, and continuing to journey

* Foreign birds, which have a reſemblance to the vulture. Art. 2. Buffon, Hiſt. Nat. des Oiſ.—*Vultur percnopterus*. Lin.

along

along the coaſt, we arrived at Aboukir at one o'clock in the afternoon.

This is now nothing more than a village, with a caſtle built upon the point of a cape, which advances pretty far into the ſea. Some ſhelves, detached in front of the cape, contain, in the large bay which the coaſt forms in this place, a little port, where the veſſels are in ſafety, even at the very foot of the caſtle, and in front of which there is a very good road. This was the uſual anchoring place for French frigates when they cruiſed in thoſe latitudes. It was equally reſorted to by merchant ſhips, which were obliged by ſtormy weather to ſhun the new, the little frequented and dangerous port of Alexandria, as well as by the *germes* of the country, when they could not gain Alexandria, nor get clear of the *Boghaſs* of the Nile, at the mouth of the branch of Roſſetta.

It was in this ſame ſand, but at too great a diſtance from the coaſt, that the fleet of the republic, commanded by the brave and unfortunate Brueys, ſuſtained a combat ſo diſadvantageous, againſt the Engliſh fleet, under the command of Nelſon; an engagement which it would have been eaſy and prudent to avoid, and the unſucceſsful iſſue of which has ſpread a new brilliancy of glory over French valour.

We

We alighted at the houſe of a Jew, the agent by patent, of the conſul general of France in Egypt. His anceſtors had conſtantly exerciſed the ſame functions with honour and fidelity. He had a great degree of affection for the French; indeed he looked on himſelf as one of them. He was a man gentle, obliging, in a word, the moſt worthy man of a Jew that I ever was acquainted with. His ſalary was ſix parats, or medinas, or from three-pence halfpenny to a groat a day. It was impoſſible to give a more ſorry payment for the ſervices he had rendered to the French veſſels which came to an anchor off Aboukir, and which could not diſpenſe with his aſſiſtance in an iſolated ſpot, where there was not a ſingle European. Formerly only a ſalary of four medinas was given, as I ſaw in the regulation made in 1706, by M. de Gatines, comptroller of the navy, and joint commiſſary for the general inſpection of the ſea-ports of the Levant. The article which concerned the ſettlement of a drogman of Aboukir, and which I tranſcribe, becauſe it has a relation to the port of Alexandria, and the navigation of the coaſt of Egypt, is couched in the following terms: "As ſe-"veral French veſſels have taken in their lading "for ſome years at the roads of *Bequiers*, and be-"cauſe it is of advantage to keep up this cuſtom, "which extends the liberty of lading, and may, in "the end, be of ſervice to the nation, if it is under "the neceſſity of quitting Alexandria, the port of which

" which is filling up from day to day: We decree,
" in order to ſave the trouble and expenſe of ſe-
" veral goings and comings expreſs to and from
" Alexandria to Bequiers, which have coſt the na-
" tion large ſums; and likewiſe that we may have
" a perſon properly qualified, who will pay atten-
" tion to every thing embarked there; that a Jew
" drogman ſhall be eſtabliſhed in that place, at the
" rate of four medinas of wages a day, including
" every thing, which ſhall be paſſed in the accounts
" of Alexandria."

Another inſpector-general, M. Tott, wiſhed, in 1777, to deprive the French nation of thoſe ſervices which had appeared to them of ſo much importance in 1706. He had announced that a drogman would no longer be maintained at Aboukir. Theſe are what may be called ruinous economies, and they were not uncommon. Whilſt the uſeful ſervant of the public was ſtripped of his ſubſiſtence, the pockets of the powerful man, to whom obligation was felt, provided he did not do miſchief, were filled with gold. Giving himſelf very little trouble about the public intereſt, the object of the warmeſt wiſhes of the uſeful citizen, but almoſt always put to one ſide, his eyes were but too frequently open only to that which could flatter his ambition, and ſatisfy his love of money. However the repreſentations and the ſolicitations of the merchants of Alexandria triumphed over the whims of ignorance

of

of local circumſtances, and the ſhabby place of drogman of *Aboukir* was kept up. The poor Jew informed us he had learnt that his little penſion was to be torn from him. He added, with a noble ſimplicity: *I have been always perfectly tranquil. I would have diſplayed the honourable warrants with which my anceſtors were furniſhed, the atteſtations of the important ſervices which they have rendered to the French nation, the proofs of the active zeal for it's intereſts, which has animated myſelf, and it is impoſſible that the juſtice of a government to which I am attached, ſhould have permitted me to be deprived of the means of exiſtence.* We were cautious not to diſturb his affecting ſecurity; but I ſaid to my companion: The good man is ſimple, poor, and perhaps neceſſary; he will not be liſtened to: he will be ſacrificed, without the leaſt attention being paid to his rights, to his ſervices, any more than to his remonſtrances. Such ſacrifices as theſe are the uſual pleaſures of governments, and the moſt common acts of their juſtice.

The houſe of *Mallüm-Youſef** (this is the name of the Jew) is in a delightful ſituation: it is ſuffi-

* The word *Mallüm* anſwers to that of *maſter*: *Mallüm Youſef*, *Maſter Joſeph*. This is the appellation which the Turks give to thoſe whom they do not chooſe to diſtinguiſh, but whom, however, they raiſe rather above the loweſt claſſes of the people.

ciently

ciently ſpacious, and would have afforded very commodious apartments, if they had been cleaned. Travellers are obliged to provide themſelves with bread: you can find none to purchaſe at Aboukir. This excepted, you could procure there, very eaſily, fiſh, ſea-urchins, oyſters, and other ſhell fiſh; and you might depend upon the attentions of the drogman and his ſon for the purchaſe of ſuch proviſions. They kept in their houſe a pair of red partridges.* They told us that theſe birds frequently viſited Aboukir, and that it was not difficult to take them, even alive. As ſoon as we had finiſhed our frugal repaſt, prepared by the wife of our hoſt, we remounted our mules to viſit the ruins which are in the environs.

Theſe veſtiges of an ancient city occupy a vaſt extent of ground. All is overthrown, all is deſtroyed. The ſoil is ſtrewed with ruins, which ſtill preſent wonderful beauties, and what remains on the ſurface gives you an idea of what might be diſcovered, if you had the liberty of digging there; but reſearches of this nature are poſitively interdicted among an ignorant and ſuperſtitious people, who not knowing any other riches than gold, imagine that travellers journeyed over their countries only with the intention of carrying off their buried

* Bartavelle, ou perdrix grecque. Buffon, Hiſt. Nat. des Oiſ. et pl. enlum. No. 231. *Tetrao rufus.* Lin.

treaſures,

treaſures, and could not believe that the monuments of the arts were the motives of their excurſions.

I ſaw ſeveral pillars overthrown: they were of the fineſt granite; their ſhafts were fluted, and of one ſingle piece, although of an aſtoniſhing ſize: the capitals were of the moſt beautiful workmanſhip. The Jew drogman told me, that he had ſeen a part of theſe pillars ſtill ſtanding upright, and a broad arch which formed the entrance of a ſubterraneous cave: but the country people had broken them all down to carry away the ſtones, which they employed in building, or in the repairs of the dikes which formed a barrier againſt the waters of the ſea. There remained ſtill, the openings of ſubterraneous galleries built of brick, and in very tolerable preſervation: rubbiſh had choaked up the entrance. In a word, all that was diſcoverable announced that formerly the moſt magnificent edifices had flouriſhed on this ſite. The inhabitants of Aboukir call theſe ſuperb ruins the city of Pharaoh.

Upon the brink of the ſea you diſcern the foundations in pretty good preſervation, of a ſpacious and regular building, in the middle of which there is a ſubterraneous cave giving way to the ſea, in it you ſee at a diſtance ruins which prove, that in this place, as in many others, it has gained upon the

the land. I had a drawing of these ruins taken. (See Plate V.) By the side of these vestiges, blocks of granite of different forms are broken down and laid in heaps. In the middle, is a colossal statue of a woman, and what is very singular, fluted all it's length. This is also of granite, and it is overthrown and mutilated in some parts. The sea, though ever so little agitated, covers it with it's waves; if you wish to examine it at leisure, you must take the advantage of calm weather. Chance was favourable to me, and I caused a drawing of it to be taken as it then existed. (See Plate VII, in which the statue is represented with the ruins that surround it.) Plate VI. fig. 2. displays it alone and detached.

The people of the country had been struck with this extraordinary statue, and as the ensemble of the ruins was in their sight the city of Pharaoh, this was also in their opinion the daughter of Pharaoh. The designer of a Frenchman, who was in Egypt at the same time with me, and who visited Aboukir, had represented it as perfect in it's execution, and in it's preservation; he had drawn it, not as it was in reality, but as he believed it ought to be, that is to say, upright, and resting on a pedestal of his own imagination. Such drawings as these are rather calculated to mislead than to give information, and they should never be permitted to enter the portfolio

Fluted Statue of Aboukin.

Publisht by I. Stockdale.

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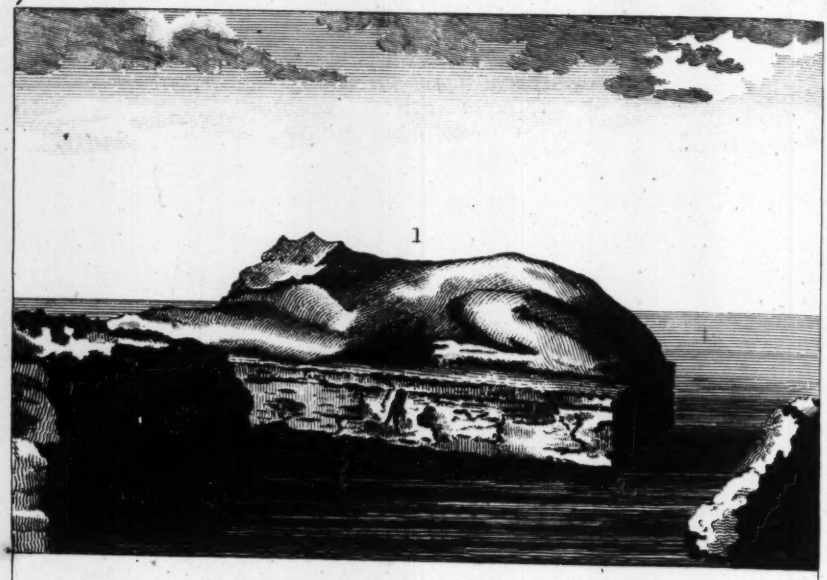
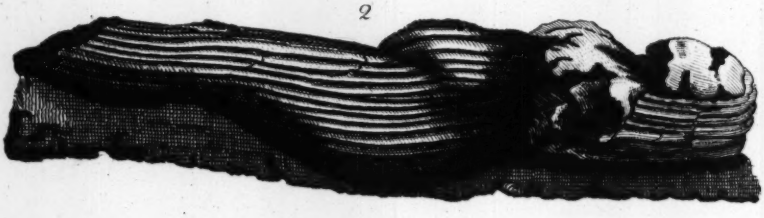


Part of the Ruins of Canopus.



Colossal Statue, Fluted, of the Ruins of Canopus.

Published by I. Stockdale.

folio of a traveller. I can anſwer for the fidelity of all my drawings; my draughtſman was accuſtomed to the moſt ſcrupulous exactneſs, and they were all taken under my own eye.

A-propos of this Frenchman, the Jew told us that when he came to Aboukir, he omitted to take with him, in the reſearches which he made in the environs, a man of the country appointed by the governor, and that this latter piqued at it, exacted under form of *avanie* a chequin from the traveller. Of conſequence, he took care that we ſhould be accompanied by the governor's ſon himſelf, and engaged that I ſhould give him, as a recompenſe, a pataca or ſix francs, (five ſhillings) and this was to avoid a demand of ſeven livres ſix ſous, (6s. 10d.) the value of a chequin in Egypt. This combination appeared extremely diverting to us.

By the ſide of this ſtatue is a very large ſphynx partly broken, the ſupporter of which has a fillet of hieroglyphics almoſt entirely effaced. (See Plate VII. fig. 1.) Theſe are the remains of a celebrated city, founded by the Greeks, and embelliſhed with all the moſt ſuperb and moſt graceful inventions of art. A magnificent temple, of which theſe wonderful pillars of granite at preſent broken down, formed to all appearance a part, was conſecrated to Serapis. Strangers arrived there in crowds, rather

to enjoy the pleaſures which they taſted in the city, than to ſacrifice to the divinity. The ſurrounding country, was decked in all the richneſs of nature, while that of luxury, ſcattered with profuſion, ſhone in the city. The attractions of it's ſituation, the beauty of the climate, the eaſe which reigned there, the delicacies of good cheer, the pleaſures of every ſpecies which appeared to have adopted this as their moſt favorite abode, every thing united to render this ſpot enchanting, and to form of it's population an aſſemblage of happy men.* But diſſoluteneſs of manners ſoon arrived there at it's higheſt pitch; licentiouſneſs raged without controul; the pleaſing illuſions, the amiable condeſcenſion of women, which has no value but in as much as it inſpired by tenderneſs, degenerated into effrontery;† in a word the ſage durſt no longer land on this ſhore.‡

The exceſſes of luxury, and the general depravity of manners, are the certain fore-runners of the approaching fall of ſtates, and of the degradation of nations. Canopus has vaniſhed: the deſcendants

* . . . . *Pelæi gens fortunata Canopi.* Virg. Georg. liv. 4.

† Every day and every night, according to Strabo, the canal was covered with veſſels filled with men and women, who danced and ſung with the utmoſt wantonneſs.

‡ When the ſage wiſhes to retire, he will never chuſe Canopus for the place of his retreat. Seneca, epiſtle 51.

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of thoſe who were it's inhabitants are mere barbarians; the Nile has refuſed to moiſten a depopulated ſoil; the plains are barren and deſert; not a particle of the monuments has preſerved it's place or it's poſition; all is fallen, all is overthrown, all is turned upſide down, and the magnificent and delightful Canopus exiſts no longer but in the remembrance of a few individuals.

The day after our arrival at Aboukir, M. Forneti and I went to pay a viſit to the governor, who was a barber. Apprized of our intention by the Jew, he had been in haſte to array himſelf in his fineſt clothes, and to dreſs his head in a white *ſchall*. We found him ſeated in his ſhop, with a fan compoſed of feathers in his hand. He received us with all the ſolemnity of a vizier; however, he offered us his ſervices in any way which might be agreeable to us. He would very willingly have preſented us with coffee, but the coffee-houſe he told us was ſhut. When we withdrew, he gave himſelf as little diſturbance as upon our arrival. Furthermore, he was on the beſt terms with our hoſt; and not without reaſon, for he was not only his governor but likewiſe his barber.

We had demanded and obtained permiſſion to enter the caſtle, which is of little importance. It is ſurrounded, on the ſide next the land with a

ditch, filled by the water of the ſea. There is a light-houſe, which is ſo poorly illuminated, that you cannot perceive it till you are pretty cloſe to it. Some pieces of cannon of a very ſmall ſize defend the fort; but they did not deter the Ruſſians from carrying off the *germes*, directly under the batteries. The Governor had ſent with us a guide through the caſtle, his lieutenant, a very dirty and louſy officer. He was ſo well pleaſed with our liberality, that from pure gratitude, he endeavoured with all his might to carry us a fiſhing, becauſe he was a fiſherman to his trade.

During the day, the village of Aboukir appeared to be without inhabitants; the doors of the houſes were ſhut; not a perſon was to be ſeen in the ſtreets. The reaſon of this was that almoſt all thoſe who lived there, were either fiſhermen, or ſailors belonging to the *germes*.

When we left the caſtle, we paſſed by the ſhop of the Governor, which was no longer that of a barber. He propoſed to me to purchaſe a good engraved ſtone, to which he affixed a high price, becauſe he had cauſed his name to be inſcribed on the reverſe of the antique engraving. In order that I might get into the good graces of a man of ſuch importance, I gave him payment for his ſeal a little above it's value.

In

In the market place there is a long black ſtone loaded with hieroglyphics. A man of Aboukir, perceiving that I conſidered every fragment of antiquity with attention, and that I ſought to diſcover them, came to offer me a ſtatue which he ſaid was very beautiful, but partly buried. I ſent one of my attendants with this man who could not find his ſtatue again. However, that he might not altogether loſe his time, and the profits he hoped to receive, he ſet himſelf to removing the earth, and in a moment he diſcovered a very fine marble monument loaded with hieroglyphics; he came immediately to inform us of it; we went to the place, and I ſaw a little pyramid in perfect preſervation of the moſt beautiful black marble, and covered along each ſide of it's baſe with a fillet of hieroglyphics equally well preſerved. I bought it of a man to whom it belonged as little as it did to me, and I gave it in charge to the Jew drogman, to ſend it to me at Roſſetta by the firſt germe which departed from Aboukir. We may form an eſtimate of the riches of this mine of antiquities, covered only by a ſlight bed of earth and rubbiſh, ſince a man, in leſs than half an hour, and without any implement but his hands, with which he ſcratched up the ground at random, diſcovered a precious fragment.

This purchaſe made, we took leave of the good Jew; we got upon the road which leads to Roſſetta,

where we arrived at ten o'clock at night. We ſaw on the ſhore ſeveral laundreſſes, and on the palm-trees, black birds which arrive in the northern part of Egypt at the ſame time with the thruſhes, at the commencement of winter. Their paſſage is more numerous after the rains have begun to fall. It is ſaid, that at that time, they are very fat and delicate. Five or ſix jackals paſſed cloſe by us; the brightneſs of the moon permitted us to diſtinguiſh them, and they did not ſeem at all intimidated at meeting us.

During the whole of this day a very violent wind blew from the eaſt-ſouth-eaſt, the weather was gloomy, and in the evening we had rain. The ſea ran high, and it's waves aroſe daſhing againſt the ſides of the dikes of Aboukir, and ſpread with fury along the coaſt. Their roarings diffuſed themſelves over the ſolitude which we were traverſing, and which they ſeemed reſolute to invade.

CHAP. XXI.

Bedouins—Birds—Boghaſs—Tower of Canopus—Abou Mandour——Grapes——Deſert——Jackals—Lizards—Inſects——Serpent——Difficulties reſpecting the pyramid of Aboukir—Opinion of the Egyptians with regard to travellers.

ON my return from Aboukir, I had a wiſh to take a near view of the Mouth of the Nile, the *Boghaſs*, ſo celebrated on account of it's dangers, and of the ſhipwrecks which happen there. The Vice-Conſul, his drogman, and a French merchant had a deſire to be of the party, and we took our departure, mounted on aſſes. We ſtopped in the gardens above the caſtle; ſome Bedouin Arabs were encamped there; their tents were not large, and ſtill leſs comfortable; they announced the wretchedneſs of thoſe to whom they ſerved as a ſhelter. The women do not cover their faces, as is the cuſtom of thoſe people who are ſettled in Egypt. The freſhneſs of youth rendered thoſe who were the leaſt aged among them ſufficiently agreeable, notwithſtanding the embrowned tint of their ſkin, and they ſeemed to be of a very complaiſant diſpoſition.

We were very ſoon ſurrounded by theſe women, who demanded ſome aſſiſtance from us; one or two

two medinas* was enough to ſatisfy them. The old ones perceiving that theſe trifling preſents were beſtowed more willingly on the young, took care to employ them as their ſolicitors, in order to awaken our intereſt and our benevolence. They laughed outright when they found that this attention had good ſucceſs, and above all when they remarked that the young girls became the objects of ſome tender glances. Whilſt my companions were holding a pretty lively converſation with the youthful Arabs, I was ſurrounded by a groupe of old women horribly ugly; they had, to appearance, judged me to be more generous than the others; they obliged me to remain in the midſt of them, and would not permit me to proceed. I had a thouſand difficulties to make my eſcape, and I congratulated myſelf ſincerely on getting out of this circle of importunate old women, whoſe decrepid and blackiſh figures were rendered ſtill more hideous, by ſeveral black compartments which they had formed on the chin by pricking the ſkin of it.

There were in theſe gardens turtle doves, thruſhes, blackbirds, and upon the date-trees ſome large beaks.† I ſaw here alſo two birds of prey, of the ſpecies formerly deſcribed as a ſpecies of falcon;

* The medina in Turkey, *parat*, is a piece in which there is a ſmall portion of ſilver, and is worth rather more than a halfpenny.

† Croſ bec. Buffon, Hiſt. Nat. des Oiſ. et pl. enlum. No. 99. *Loxia coccothauſtes.* Lin.

and

and I killed, near a little pool of water, two young woodcocks, vulgarly called *white-tails*, and by the Provençals *bechots*.* The male and the female were together.

On continuing our route towards the ſea, the grounds which the Nile had overſpread, were ſlippery, miry, and interſected with ditches. Our beaſts fell down, ſinking into the ſloughs, and frequently leaving us in the water or in the mud. No one of us was exempted from ſuch accidents as theſe, nor from the mutual pleaſantries which we paſſed upon each other. At length we arrived near that narrow and formidable paſs of the bar which encloſes the Nile. The ſea, agitated from the main, broke againſt it with fury, and there lifted up it's perturbed waves, mingled with foam and ſand. We ſaw at this ſpot the tops of the maſts of two *germes* which had been caſt away ſome days before, and upon the coaſt, ſailors employed in bearing away the dead bodies of ſome of their comrades which the ſea had thrown upon the ſhore.

The coaſt is low, and entirely formed of ſand; it was covered with a number of water birds, ſuch as goëlands, ſea-larks, herons,† &c. &c. Theſe

* Bécaſſeau, Buffon, Hiſt. Nat. des Oiſ. et pl. enlum. No. 643. *Tringa ochropus.* Lin.

† Heron commun, Buffon, Hiſt. Nat. des Oiſ. et pl. enlum. No. 787. *Ardea cinerea.* Lin.

laſt

laſt were ſingularly wild, it was impoſſible to get near them.

The next day I went about half a league to the ſouth of Roſſetta, to ſee a tower which has been called that of *Canopus*, from the miſtaken ſuppoſition, that the city of Roſſetta occupied the place of ancient Canopus. This tower has been built in modern times, on a little hill of ſand, which, at this part, forms the weſtern ſhore of the Nile. It is ſquare; it has been half demoliſhed, and what remains announces an approaching ruin. In the under part, the inhabitants of this canton ſhewed an opening into a ſubterranean cave, which, according to them, led to Alexandria.

On the top of the tower, the view extends itſelf all around, it has no other bounds but thoſe which nature has ſet. Immenſe plains develope themſelves to the ſight, but how diverſified are the pictures which it is permitted to wander over! how majeſtic are they! and on what other ſpot could we behold an aſſemblage ſimilar to this! In theſe ſcenes ſo variegated, the moſt magnificent, as well as the moſt terrible, decorations of nature, paſs ſucceſſively before the eyes. To the eaſt, coolneſs and fertility diſplay their treaſures over the beautiful carpet of the Delta; to the north, the ſea, ſource of wealth and of misfortune, rolls it's waves,

the

View of Abou-Mandour.

A *Mosque of Abou-Mandour.* B *Boats of the Nile.* C *Part of Delta.* D *Village.* E *Wood of Dattiers.*

the images of inconſtancy; and towards the weſt, the barren covering of ſterility has fixed it's everlaſting abode in the deſerts of Lybia.

Nearly at the foot of the tower, and upon the very brink of the Nile, is a moſque conſecrated to a holy Muſſulman. He is called *Abou-Mandour*, which ſignifies *father of light*. If he is the father of light, he is likewiſe the terror of ſands, for, without him, they would long ago have overſpread the city of Roſſetta, and reunited it to their gloomy domain. The belief of Mahometans does not ſtop in ſo fine a road. Abou-Mandour is the enemy of every ſpecies of ſterility, and the women who are viſited with it come to implore his aſſiſtance, and to perform a nine days' devotion under the ſcheick of the moſque: it is very rare, ſay they, that their wiſhes are not granted. The devotion to a protector ſo very powerful is general. Not a boat paſſes before this place conſecrated to him, without the mariners and the paſſengers making an offering to the ſcheick, in order that they may engage the ſaint to be favourable to them.

Plate VIII. preſents a view of this moſque. Before it is the Nile, which, a little higher, after you aſcend it in a ſouthward direction, forms a conſiderable elbow towards the eaſt-quarter-eaſt, and afterwards it takes the direction of the ſouth. On the other ſide are the ſmiling plains of the Delta. This landſcape

landſcape was taken at the foot of the tower of Canopus.

Ten or twelve years before my arrival at Roſſetta, a Turk, who lived there, had dug the ground in the environs of this tower. He found here ſome beautiful pillars of granite, which he cauſed to be conveyed to Roſſetta, in the view of employing them in the conſtruction of a building. Ali Bey, advertiſed of this diſcovery, imagined, or pretended to believe, that the Turk had found gold there. He condemned him to pay a conſiderable ſum, which totally deprived him of the means of building, and gave him ever afterwards a diſguſt for making reſearches. A part of theſe pillars were ſtill on the ſhores of the Nile, oppoſite to the houſe of the French, and the others had been broken for different purpoſes; they belonged, according to appearance, to the ancient city of *Metelis*, of which the tower of Canopus marks the ſite.

Oppoſite to the moſque of *Abou-Mandour*, upon the eaſtern ſhore of the Nile, are two or three houſes. They are called *Maadié*, becauſe they are at the ſpot of the uſual paſſage of the Delta. Above *Maadié* is *Bouſſourath*, a village formerly very much dreaded from the great number of thieves who inhabited it, and who pillaged the boats. A Bey, *Mehemet*, has exterminated them. A little above *Bouſſourath* is *Haſhbet*, another village.

On

On the weſtern ſhore, at a little diſtance above *Abou-Mandour*, is *Dgeddié*, a pretty conſiderable village, in the environs of which, a large number of vines grow in the ſand. From thence is conveyed the proviſion of grapes for Roſſetta and Alexandria.

Although they do not make any wine in Egypt, the roots of the vines are there very much cultivated. They are generally planted in the ſand, where they have a rapid growth, and the grapes which they produce acquire a delicious perfume. The greater part of thoſe which are eaten there, are of that ſpecies of which the fruits only contain a ſingle ſtone. The arabic name of the grape is *aneb*. The leaves of the vine are of great utility in the kitchens of Egypt; they ſerve to envelope large balls of haſhed meat, one of the diſhes moſt commonly preſented at good tables. It is neceſſary that the leaves ſhould be young, and they are frequently ſold at a dearer rate than the grapes themſelves.

The wines of the vicinity of Alexandria, and of ſome other cantons of Egypt, were anciently much celebrated. It would be eaſy for us to reſtore their loſt reputation, by covering the ſandy ſoil with the excellent plants of the vine which remain in it.

The ſands, in the environs of the tower of Canopus, aſſume an appearance of life, from the aſſemblage

blage of ſeveral birds. I diſtinguiſhed *percoptner* vultures; ſeveral lapwings which hopped about ſeeking their food upon the ſand, that is to ſay, different ſpecies of inſects, laundreſſes; and, finally, creſted larks or cochevis.*

Whilſt the draughtſman, with whom I left the janiſſary of the conſul, was working at the landſcape of *Abou-Mandour*, I buried myſelf in the deſert. At a diſtance this ſandy region appears to be a plain ſurface. However, it is furrowed with ſteep hills of ſand, which form between them narrow and deep valleys, at the bottom of which you ſoon arrive without the trouble of walking thither. It is ſufficient to let yourſelf go, and the moving ſand, which crumbles under your feet, conveys you gently down. Theſe deep interſections are, according to all appearance, the work of thoſe waters which have flowed over a ſoil ſo ungrateful at the preſent, and which formerly they rendered fertile.

The traces of different animals were imprinted on the ſand: I recognized thoſe of numerous jackals, and their recent dung which they had carefully covered with ſand, ſcratching like cats.

The duſt which overſpreads theſe beds of ſand is ſo fine, that the lighteſt animal, the ſmalleſt inſect,

* Cochevis, ou la groſſe alouette huppé. Buffon, Hiſt. Nat. des Oiſ. et pl. enlum. No. 503. fig. 1. *Alauda criſtata.* Lin.

leaves

leaves there, as on ſnow, the veſtiges of it's track. The varieties of theſe impreſſions produce a pleaſing effect, in ſpots where the ſaddened ſoul expects to meet with nothing but ſymptoms of the proſcriptions of nature. It is impoſſible to ſee any thing more beautiful than the traces of the paſſage of a ſpecies of very ſmall lizards extremely common in theſe deſarts. The extremity of their tail forms regular ſinuoſities, in the middle of two rows of delineations, alſo regularly imprinted by their four feet, with their five ſlender toes. Theſe traces are multiplied and interwoven near the ſubterranean retreats of theſe little animals, and preſent a ſingular aſſemblage which is not void of beauty.

I am going to deſcribe one of the principal characters of theſe lizards; they have, in reality, five on toes every foot; thoſe of the two hinder feet are conſiderably longer than thoſe of the fore, and they are all armed with nails. The eyes are very large relatively to the dimenſions of the body; the tail is round, and terminates in a ſlender point. The ſcales of the upper part of the head are broad, and of an irregular form; thoſe on the upper part of the body, the thighs, and the legs, are ſemi-circular and very ſmall; thoſe underneath the body are oblong; thoſe of the belly have the form of lozenges placed horizontally; the tail is covered circularly, with fillets of ſcales, like a mutilated cone;

cone; the tongue is broad, blackiſh, and forked at the tip.

The largeſt of thoſe lizards which I meaſured was ſeven inches in length, and it's tail was four inches four lines. Their medium ſize is from four to five inches. The upper part of the head is of a greeniſh yellow, ſpeckled with blackiſh ſpots, all the upper part of the body is variegated with green and yellow, with brown and ſinuous lines, which contraſt very prettily with the ground tint; the toes and the nails yellow; the tail, above, of green ſhaded with yellow, and ſpotted with blackiſh points, the colour of which becomes fainter on approaching the tip of the tail; finally, all the under part of the body and of the legs of a greeniſh gray, as is the under part of the tail, with the exception of a ſlight tinge of red, which mingles itſelf about half of it's length and at it's extremity. This red tint is more or leſs ſtrongly marked in different individuals. I have alſo obſerved that the ſpots of the head and on the back varied by the form, and by a very ſhining bright on ſome of theſe reptiles, and extremely black upon others; varieties which doubtleſs are only thoſe proceeding from age or ſex.

To a beautiful ſcaly robe theſe little reptiles add livelineſs and agility in their motions. They diſappear

appear very quickly into the numerous holes which they form at the foot of rare plants and ſhrubs of a rude aſpect, and which appear to partake of the barrenneſs of the ſoil where they vegetate. They do not conceal themſelves there a long time, and we could very eaſily ſurpriſe them by watching when they came out of their retreat, and preſenting the butt end of our guns to them. I took a living one in my hand; he bit one of my fingers with all his might, but he did not do me any injury, his jaws and his teeth, which are very ſlender, were too weak to occaſion any pain.

I found upon the ſands that ſpecies of *carabus aptérus*, or without wings under the ſheaths, deſcribed by Citizen Oliver, under the denomination of the ſpotted carab,* and another ſpecies with wings under it's ſheaths, the body of which is lengthened and flattened, is four lines and a half long, and it has a broad and bordered corſelet, with two little hollows on the poſterior border; the ſheaths bordered and lightly marked with longitudinal lines, each one of three points; the upper part of the head and of the corſelet, as well as the

* *Carabus aptèrus ater, thorace cordato, albo marginato elytris maculis plurimis albis—Carabus multiguttatus.* Carabe mouchetè. Olivier, Enc. Meth. *Nota.* Theſe Carabs are the ſame inſects which Geoffroie has called *bupreſtes.* Hiſt. des Inſectes des env. de Paris.

ſheaths, of a beautiful ſhining and golden green; the ſheaths bordered with a dazzling gold colour; all the upper part of the body black; the antennæ, the thighs and legs of a bright yellow; to conclude, the tarſus of a deep yellow.

Four other inſects alſo preſented themſelves to my view. One, which was four lines in length, was a tenebrion. The corſelet was rounded, convex, and bordered, each ſheath convex, ſo that the place of their junction was hollow, the body terminated in an obtuſe point, the upper part of the head, of the corſelet and of the ſheaths dotted with very ſmall points, more diſcernible upon the ſheaths than upon the head and the corſelet. The inſect is entirely of a beautiful ſhining black.*

The ſecond ſpecies was a cricket, *acrydium*. It's length was two inches two lines. The ſhining eyes were ſtriped with black and brown; it's beautiful wings were grey and covered with ſeveral ſpots, ſome yellow, and others orange coloured. The reſt of the inſect was variegated with yellow and a yellowiſh green.

* It is poſſible that the inſects I now deſcribe may have been already indicated by ſome authors: but the uncertainty which remains from indicative terms, has often arreſted me, and I thought it was better to give a deſcription, than to waſte time in making reſearches, reſpecting the greater or leſs degrees of probability in their applications.

Theſe

Theſe large crickets are very common in the ſands which I traverſed; they fly better and to a greater diſtance than the other inſects of the ſame ſpecies, and it is not eaſy to catch them.

The third inſect which I found in the ſame deſart, on the brink of a little baſon of rain water, was an aquatic ſcorpion, *hepa* or *nepa*. It's antennæ, if, indeed, we ought to regard as antennæ, parts which have a greater reſemblance to claws, are in the form of the nippers of crabs. It has but one joint on each tarſus. The eyes are very large and black. The abdomen, extremely flattened, is terminated by two appendages in form of a forked tail. The wings are blackiſh; the inſect is yellow in every other part. Little lengthened eggs, pointed, and of a bright red, were attached by one of their extremities to the belly of this individual.

Finally, the fourth ſpecies was a ſcarabeus, eight lines in length. The antennæ were in a knot like leaves, and the head broad and flattened in front, it formed a projecting plate on it's ſummit, by two ſmall points, and by other little advancing points on it's anterior border. The corſelet was broad, bordered, and ſhining on the half of it's length, and rough as ſhagreen through the remainder. A ſhield between the ſheaths; theſe were ſtriped with little points hardly diſcernible; the body was con-

vex above, and almoſt as thick as broad. The claws were ſhort, the thighs broad and thick, thoſe of the poſterior pair of claws in particular, were uncommonly broad, and had the form of little balls in ſome degree flattened. This extraordinary ſize of the hinder legs gave this ſcarabeus a very ſingular carriage.

It's colours are eaſy to deſcribe. It is of a beautiful ſhining black above: a golden line marks the ſeparation of the head and the corſelet; the antennæ, the claws, and the under part of the body, are entirely reddiſh.

I had obſerved upon the ſand a trace, which formed a regular deſign, and which at firſt led me to imagine, that this was the impreſſion of the folds of a ſerpent. Curious to know to what animal this track belonged, I followed it for about a hundred paces, and I diſcovered the ſcarabeus which was proceeding on his way heavily and inceſſantly. He muſt have taken a long time to traverſe this ſpace. His thick and round body, his ſhort claws of an aſtoniſhing ſize, in compariſon of the whole maſs, indicated his ſtrength, which he ſeemed to employ in making little journies through the deſart.

We likewiſe ſaw a very little ſerpent ſhining with the moſt beautiful colours. We could not come up with it before it had creeped into a hole, concealed by the low branches of a ſhrub.

On returning to my lodging at Roſſetta, M. Forneti ſhewed me a letter which he had juſt received from the jew drogman at Aboukir. He informed us that, at the moment of the embarkation of the little pyramid, the garriſon of the caſtle had oppoſed it. M. Forneti went immediately to the Aga of Roſſetta, who had alſo the command of Aboukir; and he had obtained, not without a great many difficulties, an order that the pyramid ſhould be allowed to depart. That officer had been already informed of the affair before M. Forneti mentioned it to him. He pretended that the people with whom we had bargained for the purchaſe of the marble, had not a right to ſell it; and, that to him alone we ought to have made application. This gave me to underſtand that I muſt lay my account with paying for it twice over. The Aga added, that he had been aſſured that the little pyramid was quite full of gold. In conſequence of this idea, he gave orders, that immediately upon the arrival of the pyramid at Roſſetta, it ſhould be brought to him firſt, in order that he might examine it, and ſee himſelf the gold which it contained. If he ſhould not diſcover any, he conſented to ſell it to us.

The ignorant Aga did not confine himſelf to theſe precautions; he ſecretly ſent for the janiſſary who had accompanied us to Aboukir, to learn of him, if there was not concealed gold in the piece

piece of marble. This janiſſary who had for a long time been attached to the ſervice of the French, and who was accuſtomed to accompany them, knew that gold was not the object of their reſearches in Egypt, and did all he could to undeceive the Aga, but it was in vain; the Mameluc would not believe that a ſtone could have value in our eyes; and the queſtions which he aſked on this ſubject were extremely diverting.

At laſt the pyramid arrived from Aboukir. When it was diſembarked at the port of Roſſetta, it attracted a crowd of the curious. Exclamations on it's beauty reſounded on every ſide. This was in their eſtimation a precious ſtone, in the real ſenſe of that expreſſion, and this was becauſe it ſhone in the ſun. They could not refrain from uttering a ſentiment of reſpect towards the *Francs*, who had poſſeſſed the ſagacity to diſcover a ſtone ſo worthy of admiration.

There was every reaſon to believe that the abſurd converſation of ſo many ſtupid admirers would reach the ears of the Aga, and that they would confirm him in his ideas of treaſure. M. Forneti and I agreed to leave the marble on the quay, and to aſſume the appearance of thinking no longer about it. However the Aga, who had had ſufficient time to convince himſelf, that he had taken ſo much trouble about what was, in reality, nothing but a

ſtone,

ſtone, was aſtoniſhed at the ſmall degree of eagerneſs which we diſplayed to carry it off. He called the janiſſary, in order to diſcover the motives of an unconcern which was only apparent. This man, who had received his cue, replied to the Aga, that after the pretenſions which he had made reſpecting the ſtone, we had thought no more of it; but that, notwithſtanding, we would ſtill take it, if he would conſent not to put too high a price upon it. The janiſſary returned with an order to have it conveyed to my lodging, with an aſſurance that the Aga would abate conſiderably in his pretended rights, and that he would ſettle the matter with M. Forneti. I got clear, in reality, for a very trifling preſent.

Circumſtances prevented my taking the little pyramid when I departed from Egypt. I left it in a magazine of the French houſe at Roſſetta, and committed it to the care of the conſul. If any perſon thought that he was at liberty to carry it off, as a thing abandoned, I entreat him to recal to mind that his acquiſition coſt me a great many troubles, much management and much uneaſineſs. I ſay nothing of the money. I muſt believe that I have the right of reclaiming it, and ſurely the motive of my reclamation, will influence the poſſeſſor to reſtore this ſuperb fragment of antiquity, as I have no other deſire than to preſent it to the national muſeum,

ſeum, in which it is worthy of occupying a diſtinguiſhed place.

Furthermore, the opinion that the reſearches of Europeans had no other object than the diſcovery of treaſures buried or ſhut up in the monuments of antiquity, was that of all the inhabitants of Egypt; and it was become one of the greateſt obſtacles which the traveller had to overcome. A Turk of Roſſetta had, at the door of his magazine, a very beautiful piece of granite, upon which hieroglyphic figures were engraved in perfect preſervation. After having a drawing of it taken,* I propoſed to the owner that he ſhould ſell me the granite itſelf; I offered beſides to have another ſtone ſet up in it's place at my own expenſe. The Turk would never liſten to any propoſal: he alleged as the motive of his refuſal, that this granite was full of gold. The man was poor, and when I demanded why he did not break his ſtone, in order to extract thoſe riches for which he appeared to have ſo much occaſion, he replied, that this would be a wicked and dangerous action, becauſe his ſtone was a taliſman.

* This drawing is one of thoſe which, at different epochas, I ſent into France, and which have diſappeared. I regret not having preſerved them; ſeveral of them were intereſting, and would have been ſuitable ornaments for this work.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

MUSEUM BRITANNICUM